



LONDON

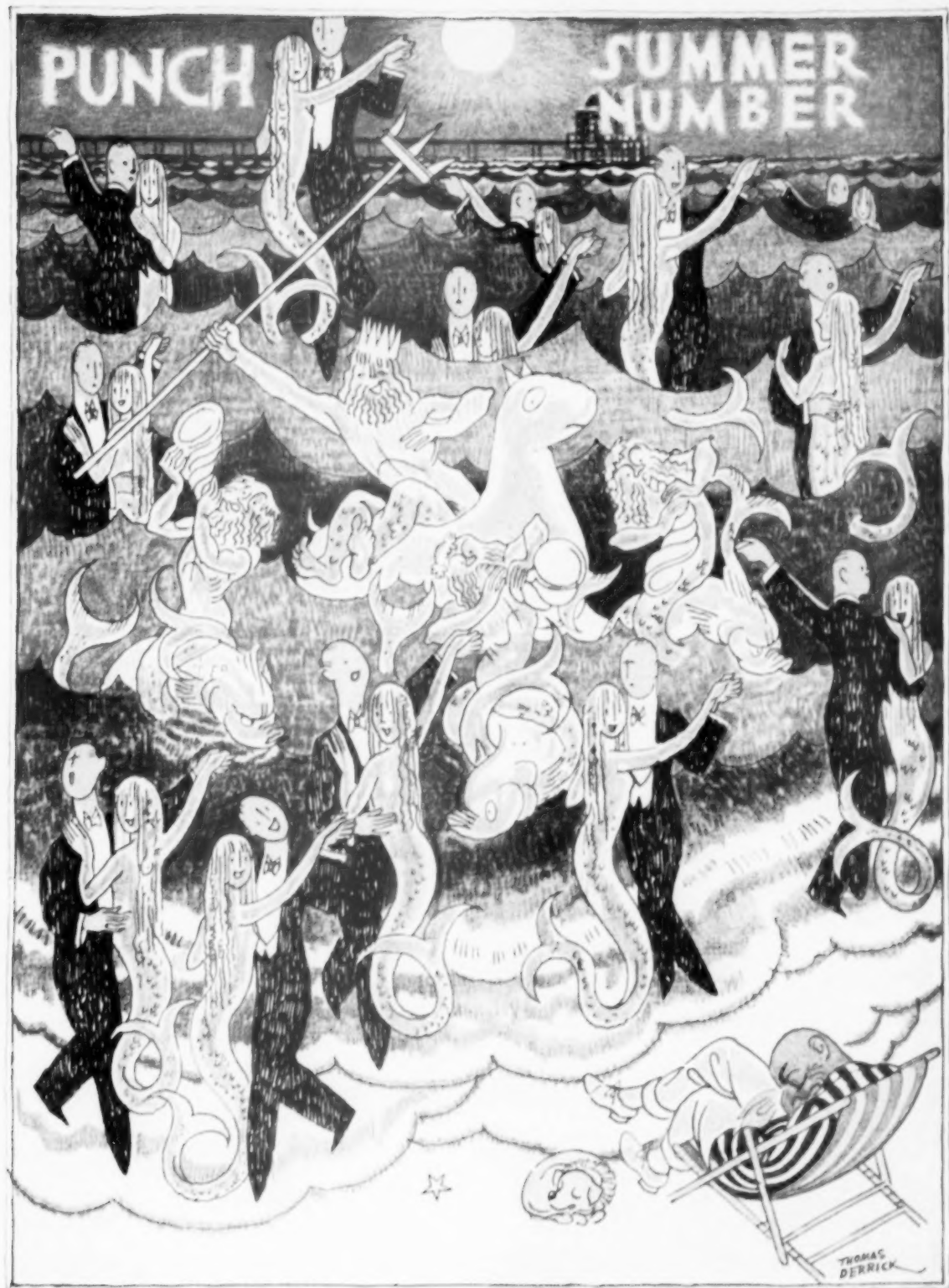
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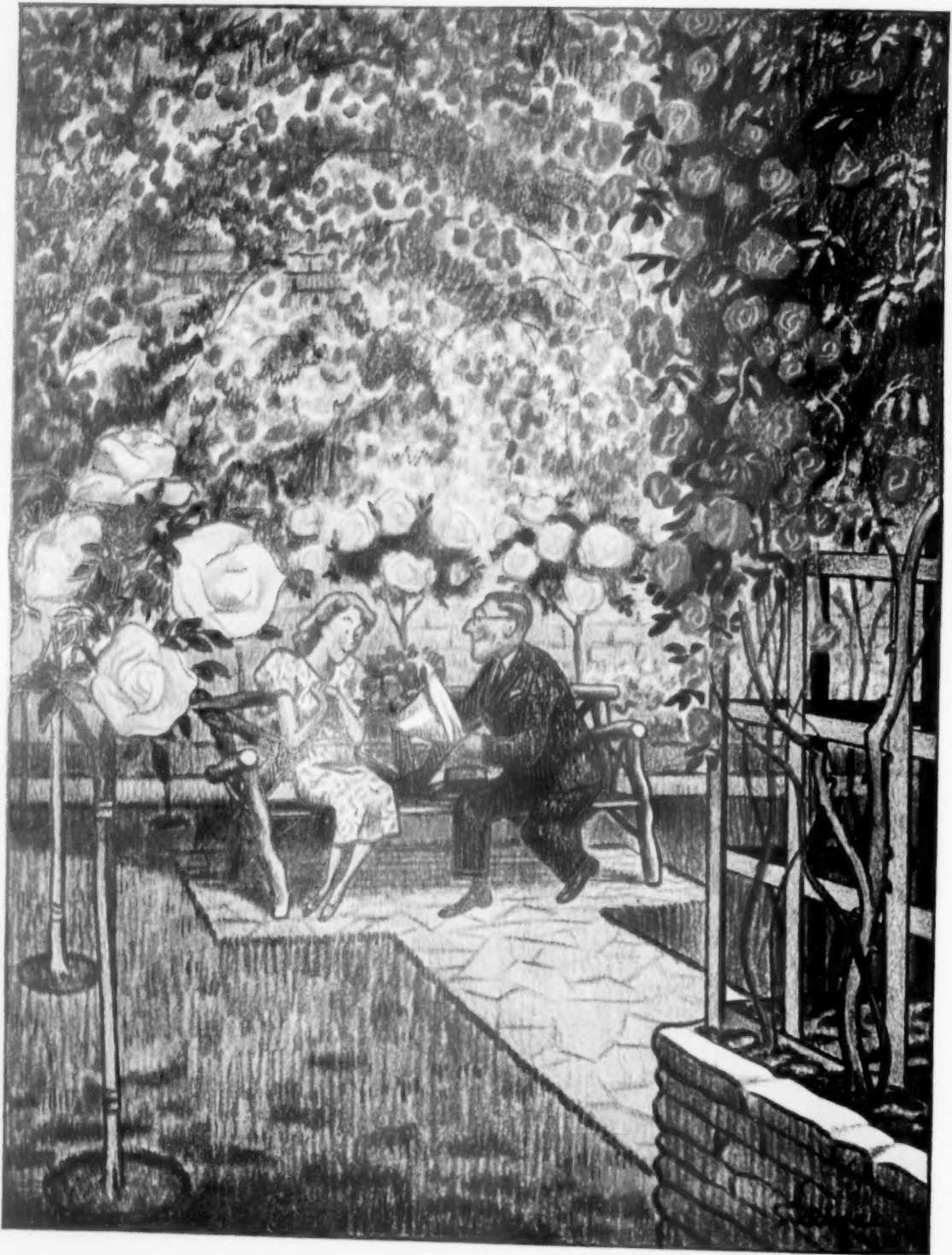
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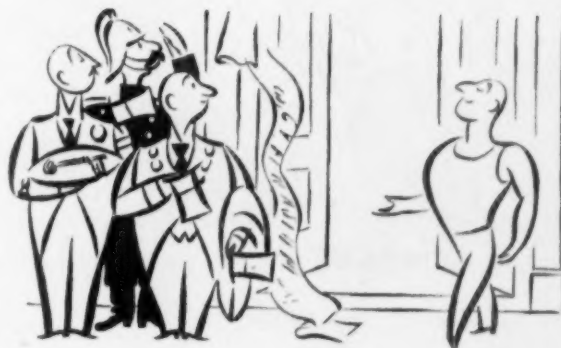
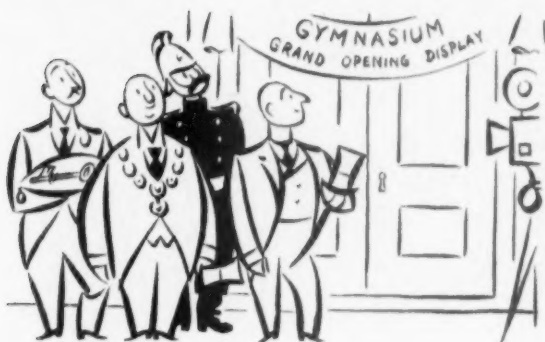
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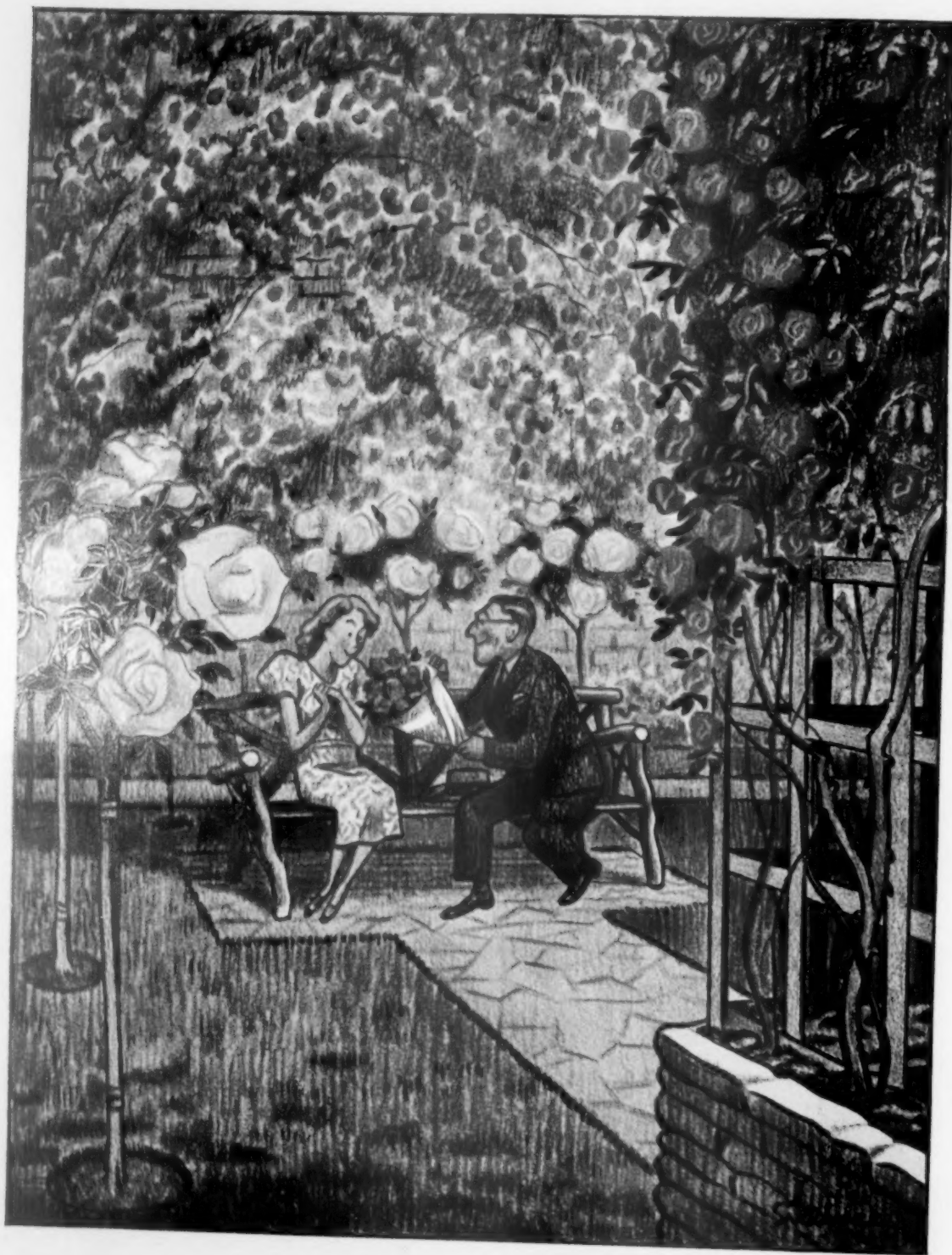
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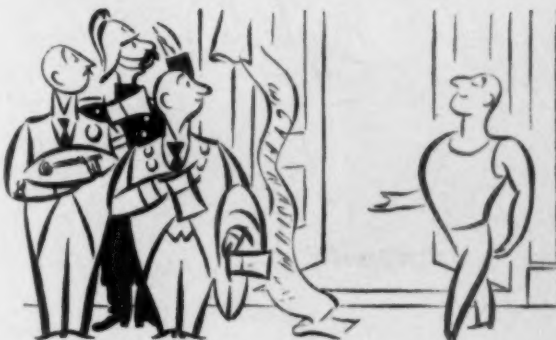
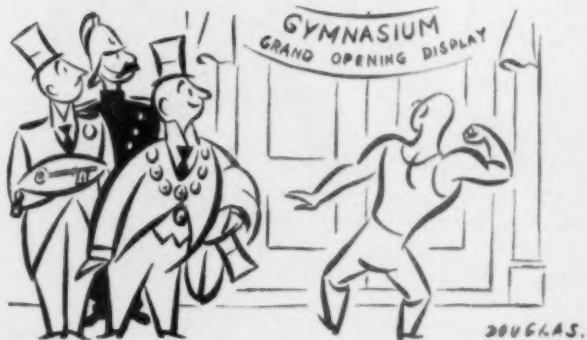
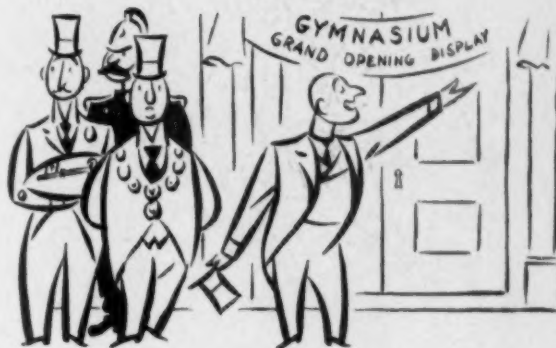
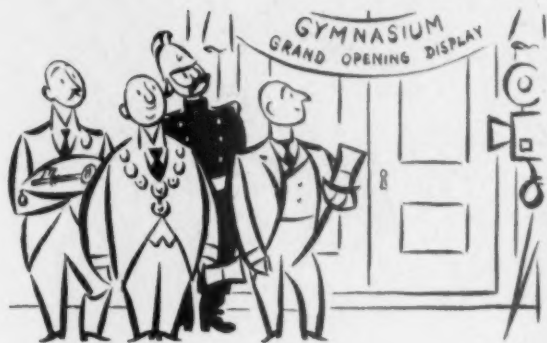
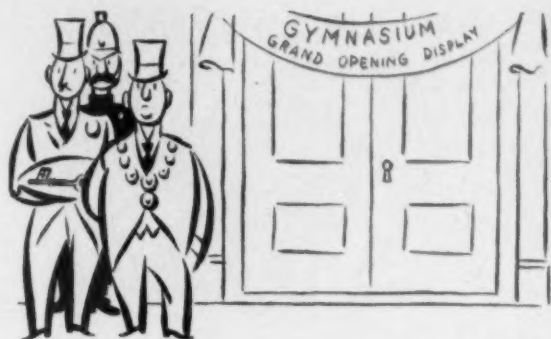


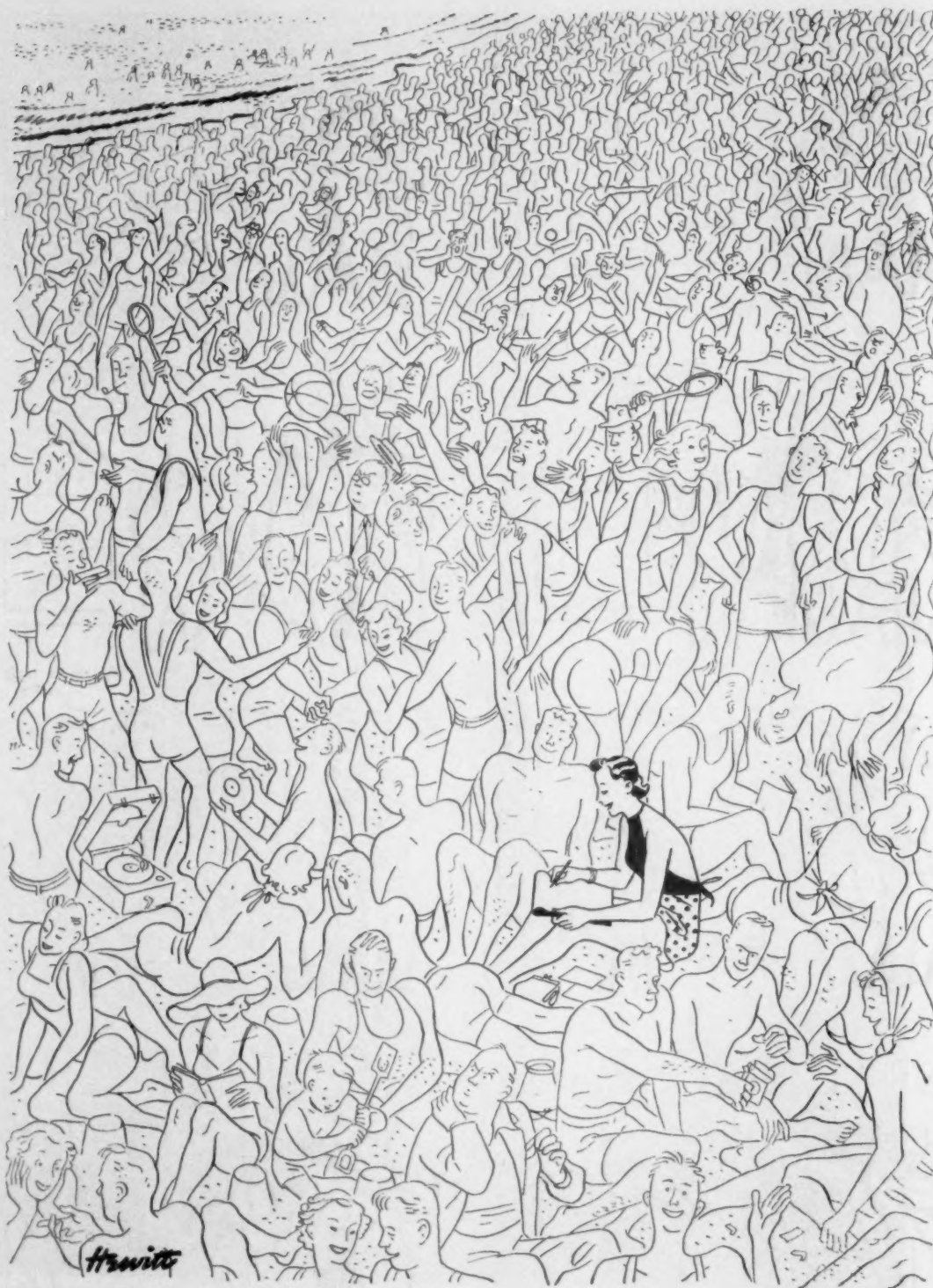
"LOOK WHAT I'VE BROUGHT YOU, DARLING—ROSES!"





"LOOK WHAT I'VE BROUGHT YOU, DARLING—ROSES!"





"... WISH YOU WERE HERE."



NICHOLAS
PARKER



The Clue of the Twisted Scone

(This would have been a Model Detective Story, given scope. But the Editor, failing perhaps to realise the importance of crime fiction in the modern world of Literature, has so ruthlessly cut, hacked and slashed the original 270 pages of finely-written M.S. that its value to both the writing and reading public has been seriously impaired. Much of the most popular material has disappeared altogether, including a plan of the bedrooms at Havering Court and a brilliantly-written account of police inquiries at fifteen different railway-stations. A suspicious Archdeacon has gone by the board. A secondary and a tertiary murder, in themselves valuable pointers to the perpetrator of the Crime Proper, have had to be scrapped. And, worst of all, thirty-six pages devoted to a futile trip to Holland in a fishing-smack have been torn bodily from the opus.

Brief notes have been inserted, where necessary, to help the reader over the more obvious gaps in the manuscript.)

PART I.

THE FINDING OF THE BODY

Timothy Weybridge, famous criminal investigator and still popular as a week-end guest in spite of the nineteen murders which had occurred at the last dozen country-houses he had visited, paused to adjust his spotless black tie in front of the Grinling Gibbons mirror. So far, he thought, he liked what he had seen of his fellow-guests at Havering Court. There was Sir Arnold Trumpeter, the small-arms expert, Professor Milkworth, the distinguished toxicologist, and his clever wife, young Breckenbridge, just back from his study of Voodoo in the West Indies, and of course the unforgettable Ada Bolivar, with her tragic beauty. What a pity she and that nice ventriloquist Bateson could not forget their old bitter feud. Surely, thought Timothy as he twitched his tie with a strength for which one would hardly have given him credit, it was absurd to think of violent death in connection with such a pleasant happy-go-lucky crowd? And yet—hadn't there been something strained, something just a little bit unnatural about

the atmosphere at tea-time when his host, Lord Codshead, threw a buttered scone at Ada? With a shrug of his shoulders and an apt quotation from Petronius, Timothy stepped into the corridor.

As he did so his trained senses became aware of several trivial facts which were later on to assume an importance of which at the moment he had no inkling. Sir Arnold Trumpeter was just coming out of his room, Bateson was just going into his, and Admiral Freelove, the euthanasia man, was hovering in his doorway as though uncertain which course to take. At the far end of the passage Professor Milkworth, his bald head and flaming whiskers conspicuous in the brilliant light, was glaring at the half-open door of the bedroom allotted to Ada Bolivar and her big bluff husband, whence came the sound of muffled thuds and a woman's shrill screaming. The appearance of Breckenbridge from the bathroom, a single riding-boot clasped tightly in his hand, added a touch of incongruity to the scene.

"I thought I heard a horse outside," he explained, in answer to Timothy's unspoken question.

Timothy only grunted. His whole attention was now concentrated on the door of Lady Codshead's room, from beneath which a dull red pool slowly oozed and spread.

(Timothy enters the room, using a pair of forceps, naturally, to turn the door-handle. He picks up a number of clues and slips them absent-mindedly into his pocket. This helps to baffle the police. Then he steps over the headless body of his hostess to a bedside telephone and rings up his old friend, Detective-Inspector Arthur Crabtree of the Yard, who happens by a fortunate chance to be staying at Castle Mannington, less than three miles away. They crack a few jokes together, for both are men of culture, and finally arrange that Crabtree shall fix things up with the Chief Constable, collect finger-print men, photographers, police-surgeons and all the usual slaughter-house attendants, and slip quietly up to the death-room (marked with a cross on the plan, as you could see if it wasn't for you know who) without ringing the front-door bell. Now we can get on.)

PART II.

THE MASSING OF THE SUSPECTS

"Well, that seems to be about all," suggested Timothy, inverting the wastepaper-basket and noticing without surprise that nothing fell out of it. "If your men have finished it might be a good thing to have Lord Codshead up here and acquaint him with the tragedy."

Inspector Crabtree nodded and despatched a plain-clothes man with a message for the master of the house.

"Lord Codshead?" he inquired a moment later of the tall grey-haired figure in the doorway.

"I am Lord Codshead, twenty-fifth Baron of Fluke, yes. May I ask what brings you to my wife's room at half-past seven of a May evening?"

"I regret to inform you that your wife's head has been chopped off," replied the Inspector with a gesture of sympathy.

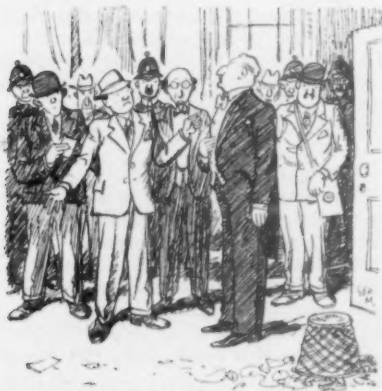
"Can't find it anywhere," added Timothy, bouncing himself up and down on the Queen Anne bed.

Not a muscle of the peer's face moved, but the sudden clenching and unclenching of his long nervous fingers showed the intensity of the strain under which he was labouring.

"Nothing must be touched," he said dully, "until the police arrive."

"The police are already here, Lord Codshead," said Crabtree gently, and he introduced Detective-Sergeant Crook, Detective-Constables Snake and Titlow of the Photography and Finger-print Departments and Constables Ram, Burgess, Huddle and Flint.

"How do you do?" said Lord Codshead mechanically. "This is a most distressing business. Most distressing. But I do not see that I can be of much help to you. My wife and I were, as you probably know, on very bad terms. She had threatened to divorce me, and that I was determined



"THE POLICE ARE ALREADY HERE."

at all costs to prevent. I would do anything—even murder—to keep the name of Codshead free from scandal."

"Quite, quite," murmured the Inspector, his eyes suddenly steely with intelligence. "I must warn you that nothing you say will be taken down as evidence and used in writing against you."

"Just a matter of routine," explained Timothy.

"I am familiar with police procedure, thank you," said the Baron coldly. "You may recall the case of Lady Evangeline Codshead, whose dismembered body was found in an ash-can. She was my first wife."

Timothy and Inspector Crabtree exchanged glances.

"Constable Flint," barked the latter sharply, "make a thorough search of every ash-can on the premises and bring anything you may find to me here at once. Take Huddle with you."

Constables Flint and Huddle saluted and went out.

"Now, Baron," he continued briskly, "we are of the opinion that Lady Cod's head—I beg your pardon—Lady Codshead's head was removed with some sort of heavy axe or chopper. Do you know of the existence of any such weapon?"

"There is a battle-axe above the fireplace in the library. But it is very heavy. They say that only a Codshead can wield it."

Crabtree exchanged another glance with Timothy, Snake exchanged one with Titlow, and even Constables Ram and Burgess looked shyly at one another.

"Ah! And when was the last occasion on which to your knowledge this weapon was taken down?"

"The battle of Crecy."

The Inspector made a note.

"I see. And when was the last occasion on which to your knowledge the battle-axe had *not* been taken down?"

"At one minute to six this evening. I made a special note of the time because on my way out of the library, after inspecting the axe, I ran into the grandfather clock in the hall and I remember noticing that it struck six as I did so."

"The shock might have made it strike six, don't y' know," suggested Timothy.

The Baron considered this. "I think not," he said slowly. "The last time I ran into it it struck two."

"Would that be about the time your first wife was discovered in the ash-can?" inquired Timothy casually.

"The very day," agreed the Baron.

"Thank you, Sir," said the Inspector, while Detective-Sergeant Crook exchanged glances with anyone who happened to be looking. "Your testimony has been of the utmost value."

Baron Codshead withdrew, with a promise to send the Head Butler at once.

"You are the Head Butler?" asked Crabtree as a saturnine cross-eyed servant in white running-shorts presented himself.

"No, Sir, I am the fourth footman. The Head Butler left half-an-hour ago on his bicycle, carrying some heavy round object in a paper-bag."

Inspector Crabtree stepped to the telephone and sent out an all-stations call to pull in all Head Butlers riding bicycles within sixty miles of Havering Court. Scotland Yard's tremendously efficient machine, the finest in the world, had been set in motion and the arrest of the butler was now merely a matter of time.

"Do you always wear running-shorts in the evening?" asked Timothy curiously.

"Yes, Sir," replied the menial, but his eyes flickered as he spoke and Timothy knew that the man lied.

"Now, Fraser," cut in the Inspector, swiftly divining the man's name, "who sorts your master's laundry?"

"Baron Codshead is not in the habit of having his laundry sorted. When soiled he discards them and purchases another pair."

"I see. And what becomes of the soiled linen?"

"I must refuse to answer that question, Sir."

"Have you any objection to my sniffing the soles of your boots?" asked Timothy.

"You must please yourself," answered the footman indifferently.

Timothy was still on his knees when there was a thunderous knock on the door and Inspector Crabtree, slipping a hand into his coat-pocket, called "Come in."

Constables Flint and Huddle saluted and came in.

"Find anything, you two?" demanded Crabtree.

The constables deposited on the floor thirty-six empty tins, a copy of *The Radio Times*, five banana-skins, an apple-core, two old bicycle-tyres, the back-legs of a rabbit, a pair of braces, a cardboard-box marked "This Side Up—With Care," and a quantity of finely-sifted ash.

"Nothing else?" asked the Inspector, busy with his pencil.

Constable Flint shifted uneasily. "Only some mackerel-heads," he muttered, "which we overlooked."

"You must overlook nothing in our profession," said



"TIMOTHY KNEW THAT THE MAN LIED."

Crabtree sternly. "What do you make of this lot, Timothy?"

Timothy was examining the braces through a microscope. "You notice that these have been severed at a point five-eighths of an inch below the junction of the two straps at the back?" he asked keenly.

"Well?"

"Surely it's as clear as day. The murderer took such a savage swing at his victim that the blade, after removing her head, travelled round in a complete circle and severed his own braces at the back. You will find an account of a somewhat similar incident in Froissart's *Apology for a History of Mediæval Times*."

"You mean——?"

"Find the owner of these braces, Arthur, or better still find a man whose trousers began to sag soon after six o'clock this evening and you've got your murderer."

Crabtree emitted a shrill whistle and turned to the trembling footman. "Fraser, kindly inform all the male guests in the house that I should be glad to see them here in their shirt-sleeves at once."

(It seems almost incredible that the whole of the second half of this brilliant scene, in which every guest turns up in a brand-new pair of braces and fatally incriminates himself by a series of palpable floaters, should be sacrificed to the Moloch of

editorial short-sightedness, but such is indeed the case. Nay, worse. Even the return of the errant butler, one of the most thrilling episodes in the book, and his confession, forced from him by Timothy's adroit questioning, that he had purloined a melon to take to his ailing grandmother, have fallen a victim to the insensate lust of the blue-pencil.

Somewhere hereabouts, also, there should be a chapter or two exhibiting Inspector Crabtree's tact in dealing with the local Superintendent. This shows acute knowledge of police procedure, and is never omitted, except by bigoted editors. Students should note that Superintendents are heavyish, red-faced, quickly-mollified men, with blue eyes that can on occasion become remarkably shrewd. Chief Constables should be kept in the background. They tend to say, "Carry on then, Superintendent," rather testily when their arrangements for a day's rough shooting are disturbed. Observe, by the way, that police-officers when in conference always use each other's full titles, e.g., "Where was this top-hat found, Detective-Sergeant?" "In the aviary, Deputy Divisional Inspector, crammed with birdseed."

But what's the use? We are hustled straight on to the final conference in the cosy library at Havering Court.

PART III

THE SERIES OF STILL-BORN SOLUTIONS

"Now as I see it," said the Superintendent (the theories of Constables Ram, Huddle, Flint and Burgess having, together with those of Detective-Constables Snake and Titlow and Detective-Sergeant Crook, been laughingly put aside), "the whole case hinges upon two points: (1) Who killed Lady Codshead? and (2) What became of her head? I take the first point first as being the more important."

There was a sudden stir of interest.

"I have spent a good deal of thought on that battle-axe and as a result of my cogitations I have drawn up and written down on paper my reconstruction of the crime. I call it, as you see,

THE CASE AGAINST ADMIRAL FREELOVE

5.45 P.M. Sir Arnold Trumpeter sharpens the axe on a grindstone in the back-yard (seen by Fraser).

6.0. Battle-axe back in the library (Baron Codshead's evidence, corroborated by grandfather clock).

6.5. Stephen Bolivar (*N.B.*—Wanted by New York police) carries axe upstairs to show Ada (corr. by Ada) and leaves it in corridor.

6.10. Breckenbridge seen by house-parlourmaid Rosie emerging from bathroom covered in blood (? Voodoo).

(*Note.*—6.0–7.0. Bateson and Professor Milkworth playing slosh in billiard-room.)

6.10–6.30. Time of murder. Axe missing.

6.30. Fraser finds bloodstained axe in Bateson's room and tidies it away into library.

6.45 (approx.). Bolivar stuns Ada with boathook.

6.50. Professor Milkworth finds strychnine in middle pocket.

7.0. Sir Arnold shoots himself in foot with .33 revolver.

7.15. Breckenbridge borrows braces from Head Butler who promptly absconds.

7.45. Discovery of the crime.

"There, gentlemen," concluded Superintendent Pritchett, throwing himself over backwards in his chair, "that's how I reconstruct the sequence of events. What do you think of it?"

"Very good indeed, Super," murmured Timothy; "but it doesn't mention Admiral Freelove, y' know."

"Exactly. There's the one man whose movements are entirely unaccounted for. Where was he? What was he doing? Why did he, almost alone among the guests, make such a point of not being seen for a single instant in possession of the battle-axe? Clearly because he had made up his mind all along to murder Lady Codshead. Nothing else will fit the facts."

"But he didn't arrive till 7.40," objected Crabtree.

The Superintendent's brow grew dark as thunder.

"Why was I not informed of this?" he demanded.

"I'm sorry, Superintendent," smiled Crabtree genially, "I thought you Superintendents knew everything."

Before the Inspector's ready tact and obvious desire to be friendly Pritchett's wrath melted away like snow. "Well," Detective-Inspector, he said good-humouredly, "what is *your* theory?"

Inspector Crabtree directed a shrewd glance at the empty coal-scuttle.

"At the beginning," he said slowly, "I confess I fell into the mistake which you all seem to have made of accepting too readily the alibis provided for each other by Bateson and Professor Milkworth. Then I began to ask myself what we knew of these two men. Nobody, so far as I was aware, had ever seen the two of them together. It is true they had been heard talking in the billiard-room, but in view of Bateson's profession that proved nothing. Then in a flash it came to me. *Bateson and Professor Milkworth are, in reality, one and the same man.*"

"Crikey!" gasped Constable Burgess, and was immediately sent home for insubordination.

"It's an idea, that," said Timothy thoughtfully. "And one we can easily test." He leant forward and pressed a bell.

"Please ask Mr. Bateson to step in here a moment," he ordered when Fraser presented himself.

A moment later the lanky form of the ventriloquist

from Professor Milkworth's face to reveal the pallid features and loose vicious mouth of Fraser, the fourth footman.

Pandemonium broke loose as three constables and two



"FRASER, THE FOURTH FOOTMAN."

detective-constables in plain-clothes hurled themselves upon the writhing servitor.

"But look here, Mr. Weybridge," began Superintendent Pritchett, when the miscreant had been finally cautioned and led away in irons, "this is still far from clear to me. If Fraser did it—"

"Oh, m' dear fellow, Fraser didn't do it. Fraser is only a pawn. I'm afraid the whole business goes very much deeper than that. If you want to understand properly what happened in this house between six and seven o'clock on the night of May 27th you must go back to an August morning in 1882 when the sailing-ship *Barbarossa* foundered off the Lizard with a cargo of betel-nuts."

The Superintendent's eyes showed keen interest.

PART IV.

TIMOTHY DOES IT AGAIN.

(This is really one of the most inexcusable cuts of the whole barbarous collection. Timothy's careful analysis of the contents of the ash-bins, his excursus on the significance of braces in the practice of Voodoo, the way in which he proves that the battle-axe had nothing to do with it, and his dramatic production of the missing mackerel-heads from Constable Flint's pocket must inevitably rank among the finest things he has done. Did Lord Codshead's nose bleed when he ran into the clock? What was the name of the Head Butler's grandmother? Why was the strychnine put into the middle pocket and not, as one would expect, into the soup? These were some of the questions Timothy asked himself and almost immediately answered. That all this brilliant detective-work should be lost—and with it a final solution of the mystery so baffling and so utterly unexpected that even the author had to read it through three times before he could believe his eyes—represents surely as crushing an indictment of modern journalistic methods as could well be found.)

Who killed Lady Codshead? The answer, if answer there be, must in the circumstances be left to the reader—if reader there be. To all that remains of the final chapter he may now devote himself, and kindly welcome. It may help.)

"And a jolly neat piece of work too," said Inspector Crabtree heartily. "I don't know where we should have been without you, Timothy."

"Oh, I don't know, you know," grinned Timothy. "It was the buttered scones that put me on to it really." H. F. E.



"SIR ARNOLD TRUMPETER SHARPENS THE AXE."

appeared in the doorway and his cordial tones greeted them from the fireplace. Timothy pressed the bell again.

"Now, Fraser, please ask Professor Milkworth if he can spare us a few minutes."

For what seemed an unendurable period the little party waited. Then a familiar step was heard in the passage and Professor Milkworth bustled into the room. "Ah, gentlemen!" he cried gaily. "Good evening, Bateson."

Inspector Crabtree sat like a man turned to stone. "This will finish me at the Yard," he cried brokenly.

"Not so fast," said Timothy smoothly, and with a sudden panther-like movement stripped the flaming moustaches



TO THE END OF THE BEACH—



—AND BACK



THE FATHERS' MATCH ABANDONED, or ANOTHER REPUTATION SAVED



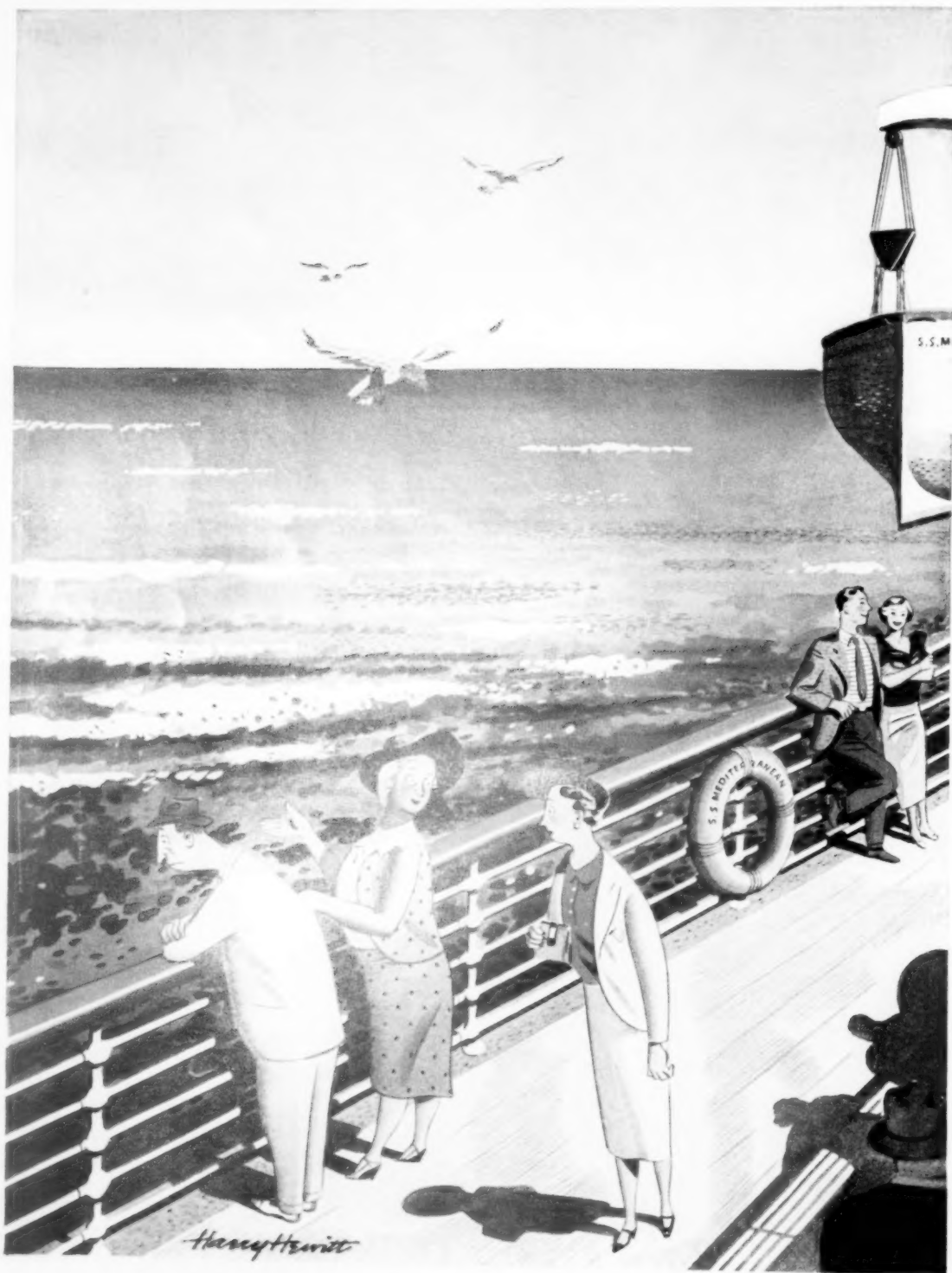
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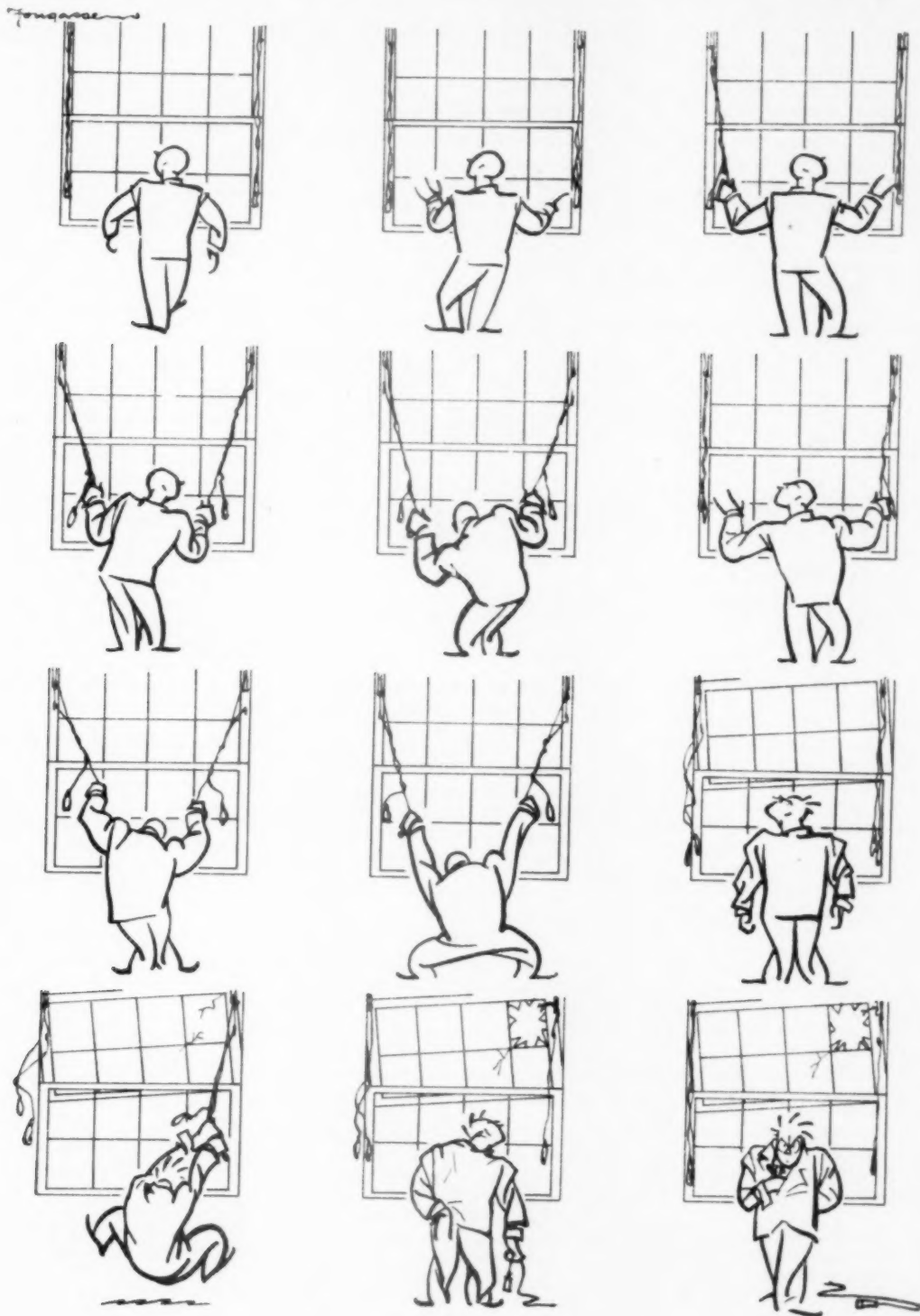
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THE FATHERS' MATCH ABANDONED, or ANOTHER REPUTATION SAVED



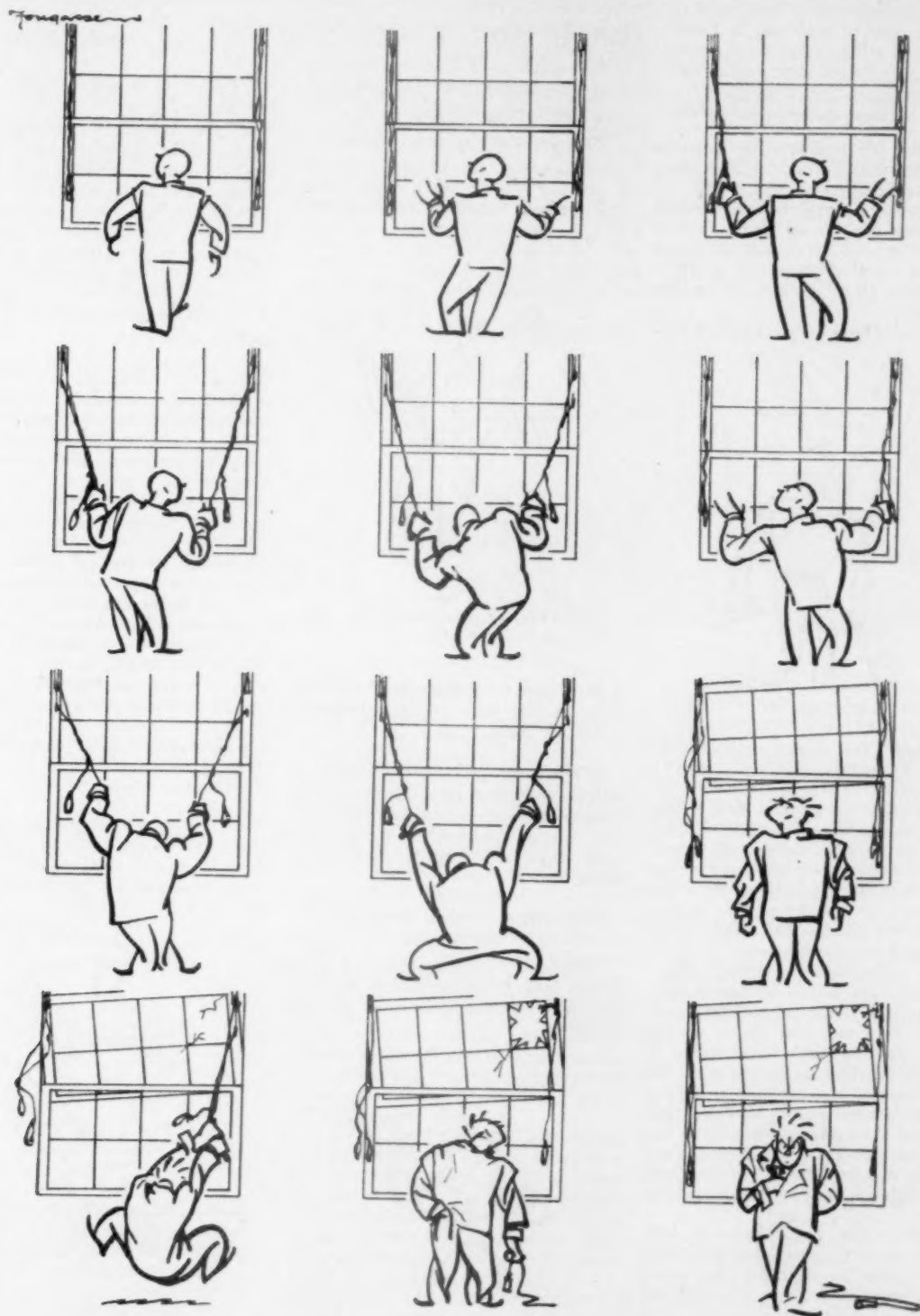
"IT WAS JUST ABOUT HERE THAT EDWIN LOST A GOLD PENCIL LAST YEAR."



THE TRIVIAL ROUND, THE COMMON TASK



"IT WAS JUST ABOUT HERE THAT EDWIN LOST A GOLD PENCIL LAST YEAR."



THE TRIVIAL ROUND, THE COMMON TASK

How To Serve At Lawn Tennis

Amare est servare—love of having first serve.—Old Roman characteristic.

THE first big problem that presents itself to the young server is *How many balls to hold?*

The only alternatives really worth considering are *two* or *three*, as it is generally agreed in reputable Lawn tennis circles that there is a touch of the bizarre about greater or smaller numbers.

The idea of holding three (apart from



HOW MANY BALLS TO HOLD?

showing that you can) is that if you serve a let you have an extra ball ready and so avoid breaking the rhythm of your effort. But you will find that, no matter how many you have left, when you serve a let one of the other players immediately throws you a ball, so the often fatal pause still occurs.

Probably the real advantage in holding three is psychological. When only two are held and you throw up the second, the complete ball-lessness of your left hand forces on the mind the realisation that this is your *very last try*. And this is unnerving. With one still left in the hand from holding three, the mind subconsciously comforts itself with the illusory hope of yet one more chance. This is soothing and makes for success.

On the other hand, three is fifty per cent. more than two, and procuring three is therefore fifty per cent. more work than is involved in rounding up only two. In long hours of play this mounts up considerably and may well be the last deciding straw in a needle match (pardon).

Whether all this is true or not it is still worth thinking about.

Now for some service technique.

PLACING THE FEET

Place both feet firmly on the ground.



THE PRACTICE OF THROWING UP ALL THREE.

I don't care what the other books say. This is the only really satisfactory place for them.

HOW TO HOLD THE RACKET

The racket should be held *by the handle*. Grip it in the *right hand*, unless you happen to be left-handed, in which case you should grip it with the *left hand*.

POSITION OF THE HEAD AND SHOULDERS

The head should be balanced on top of the neck, from the base of which the shoulders should spread out due east and west.



WHAT SORT OF SERVICE ARE YOU GOING TO PATRONISE?

Upper lip should be stiff.

Mouth mobile.

Eyes. You should be level-eyed. It is a mistake to place one eye above the other. I am well aware that Squintski the Soviet Davis Cup ace favoured this method. But it will be remembered that he was ultimately accused of sabotaging his team's chances by serving doubles, and was saved from the death penalty only by pointing out that the linesmen were in TROTSKY's pay.

THROWING UP THE BALL

You are probably holding three balls. Throw up one only and hit it. The practice of throwing up all three and hitting the middle one is extravagant.

Be careful to throw it the right height. Anything higher than that is too high, and lower than that is almost certainly too low. If you throw it too far forwards you should have thrown it a little further back, and if too far back you will crick your neck watching it. Finally, if you throw it out to the right you won't be able to reach it; and if out to the left, don't try to hit it at all or you'll probably stun yourself.

Now that I have got you correctly



CROUCH TENSELY.

placed and induced you to throw up a ball the right height, it is time for you to face your next big problem.

What sort of a service are you going to patronise?

The usual kind is one cannon-ball fault followed by a dolly-drop second, which I will call Type A. You will probably select this pair. Indeed the

alternative lines in services that offer themselves are not very attractive. The range includes—

Type B. Two cannon-ball faults.

Type C. One screw fault followed by a dolly-drop second.

Type D. Two screw faults.

Type E. One dolly-drop. Second not needed.

Types B and D have obvious disadvantages and are not worth our serious consideration. You might then think there was little to choose between A, C and E and be rather inclined to plump for E as producing the same effect as the other two without the extra expenditure of energy.

An idle shallow view, Thomas, and unworthy of you, I hope. For if that is a fair sample of your intelligence you will never conjure your name out of even the miserable little brackets of the first round, much less steer it safely through the bigger and better brackets of the later rounds into the grand swelling curves of the final bracket through which will burst in glory the shining name of the victor.

You must use your brains.

If your first is a fast one your opponent will have to get into position a yard or so behind the base-line. He knows well enough it is going to be a fault, and so do you. Nevertheless back he goes to crouch tensely just as though he expected it to be in. It is a charming piece of old-world courtesy that yet survives the casual manners of to-day.

This little formality over, he must untense himself, move up several yards and re-tense to receive your second. A little quiet brooding on this manoeuvre and its possibilities should begin to occur to you.



HUSTLE HIM JUST A LITTLE.

By dint of careful observation and hard practice you should be able to

gauge the timing between your serves so as just not to allow him to do all this comfortably. Hustle him just a little and you will ruffle him. Make him feel he hasn't quite got enough time to get into the new position he wants.

But don't overdo it. If your second follows the first too obviously quickly he will refuse to play it and make you serve again. So practise hard to get the rhythm right, and speed it up or slacken off according as your opponent is quick on his feet or slowish. You will be well repaid for the time spent in mastering an essential piece of court-craft.

This is the most consistently use-



A CANNON-BALL IN THE SMALL OF THE BACK.

ful aspect of your cannon-ball fault. Nevertheless there are other ways of turning it to good account.

Thus, if there is a wall or other resilient surface around the court you may be able to get the rebound to meet and mingle with your slow second—a most confusing experience for the striker. Even if he insists on replaying the point you will have made him uneasy lest it happen again. He will be watching your first serve apprehensively over one shoulder. His concentration will be wavering, and you will have advanced towards that Mecca of all tennis tactics, the breaking up of the opponent's game.

Yet another use of the cannon-ball is as a corrective to a poaching partner in a four. You must know the partner who edges down the net into your court in incompetent attempts to cut off the return. A most annoying fellow. Generally all he does is just touch it. Or he misses it altogether and merely unsights you in your follow-up to the net so that you run right into it or let it go between your legs or something equally futile.

A certain cure for this sort of thing

is to let him have a cannon-ball in the small of the back. Just one will be enough. After that he'll stand right out in the tram-lines.

Of course you'll have to apologise profusely, but it's worth it.

FOOTFAULTS

The whole subject of footfaultery is shrouded in mystery. So complicated



UNDERSTAND EXACTLY WHAT A FOOTFAULT IS.

is it indeed that it is said that there are not more than six people living to-day who really understand exactly what a footfault is. And as one of these is sure to be Professor EINSTEIN, at any moment the subject may take a turn for the worse into the Space-Time Continuum.

In order to develop clear ideas on the subject you should work through all the permutations of this analysis.

Consider whether the following

- I. Are necessarily footfaults
- II. Are never footfaults



(C) SIDEWAYS. (E) DIVERTINGLY.

- III. May in certain circumstances be footfaults
- if
- A. At any time during the act of serving other than
- B. The actual moment of actually striking the ball
- and
1. (i.) one
(ii.) both feet are
(a) inside } the base-line.
(b) on }
- Or
2. One foot is off the ground and
(i.) the other is 1 (a) or (b).
(ii.) the other is 4 (a).
- Or
3. Both feet are off the ground
(i.) only just
(a) inside or on } the base line.
(b) behind }
- (ii.) so high that one cannot judge whether they are
- (a) inside or on } anything.
(b) behind }
- Or
4. Both feet are on the ground
(a) behind } the base line.
(b) not behind }
- Or
5. Both feet are on the ground in the act of taking a step
(i.) forwards
(ii.) backwards
(iii.) sideways.
6. (i.) one foot } is/are on ground
(ii.) both feet } but sliding
(a) forwards (a) rapidly
(b) backwards (b) quickly
(a) distinctly
(b) imperceptibly
- (c) sideways (a) convergingly
(b) convulsively
(c) divergingly
(d) divertingly.
7. Both feet are pegged down
(i.) 1
(ii.) 2
(iii.) 3 } yards
etc., etc.)
- behind the base-line and you serve underhand.
- Thus, consider such questions as—
Under what III. are B 6 (ii.) (c) β — I?
Is A 3 (ii.) (b) I., II. or III.?
- Can circumstances arise in which it is possible to serve a footfault with your head, arm or racket? If so, why not? And if not with the racket, what would you serve it with? J. B. E.



"AND WHAT DOES YOUR DADDY DO?"
"OH, HE JUST HAMMERS ABOUT."



COMING OUT

The Harness Room

I WENT into
the saddle house
as quietly
as any mouse,
and thought I saw
old Charlie there,
cleaning bits
with loving care.
I thought I heard
his many tales
of poaching trips
and snow-bound mails,
of old-time dealers
and their tricks,
of mighty hunts
and burning ricks,
of toby-men
his grandad knew,
of postboys decked
in buttoned blue,
and how his brother
drove the Mail
across the wolds
In snow and hail.



He knew, for he
was never idle,
each bit and strap
of every bridle;
he knew the rutted
roads and lanes—
and he, by God,
could handle reins.
And he would sit,
too old to groom,
soaping saddles
in this room,
and tell me, looking
rare and sad,
of days before
the world went mad:
of Christmases
and yokels' smocks,
of toll-gates and
their tricky locks,
or prize-fights which
the justice banned—
and everything
in old England.

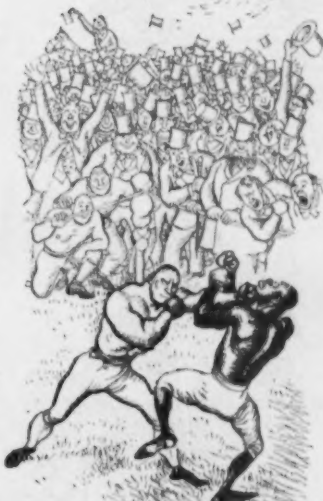




Around him, emblems
of his earth,
were bit and saddle,
spur and girth,
and tug and crouper,
rein and crop,
and bits of chaff
(which we called
chop)
and collars with
their fitting hames,
and spears for wild
tent-pegging games.
There, bridles—rows
and rows and more—
with reins hung down
just off the floor;
and surcingles
and numnahs too,
and neat's-foot-oil,
and horse-rugs blue
with twined initials
on the quarters,
the stirrup-irons
Charlie bought us;
and all the patent
medicines
you use when strangles
first begins;

the horse-clippers
with polished handles,
the carriage lamps
with yellow candles,
the dandy-brushes,
martingales,
the gag when curb-
and-snaffle fails;
and traces; and,
for fetlocks' puff,
the bandages—
a cure enough.
And whips (the best
of all, I think)
with whipcords green
and brown and pink. . . .
And I would ask
the whole world whether
there ever was
a smell like leather.

* * * * *
Old Charlie's gone.
The walls are bare,
There is no leather
anywhere.
And never again
in this room
will there be need
for any groom.



PONT



"OFFICES OF THE IMPERIAL
CONSOLIDATED CORPORATION,
SIR? YES, SIR—



TAKE THE TURNING TO THE
LEFT—



AND THE SECOND TO THE
RIGHT—



THEN CROSS AT THE TRAFFIC
LIGHTS—



THEN TURN RIGHT AT THE
MONUMENT—



THEN RIGHT AGAIN—



THEN STRAIGHT ON—



AND BEAR LEFT—



THEN TAKE THE FIRST TURNING
TO THE RIGHT—



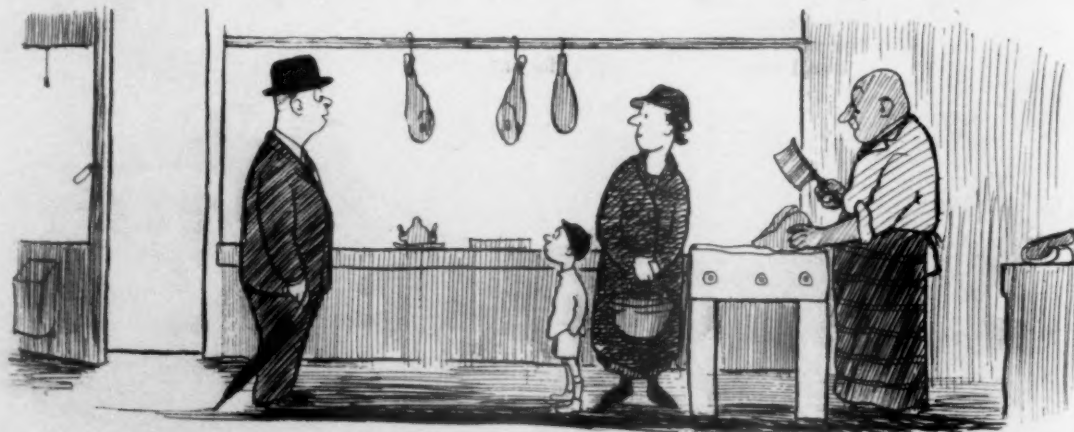
AND THE SECOND TO THE
LEFT—



AND KEEP STRAIGHT ON AS FAR
AS YOU CAN GO—



TURN RIGHT—



AND THERE YOU ARE."



INTERLUDE

PONT



"OFFICE OF THE IMPERIAL
CONSOLIDATED CORPORATION,
SIR? YES, SIR—



TAKE THE TURNING TO THE
LEFT—



AND THE SECOND TO THE
RIGHT—



THEN CROSS AT THE TRAFFIC
LIGHTS—



THEN TURN RIGHT AT THE
MONUMENT—



THEN RIGHT AGAIN—



THEN STRAIGHT ON—



AND BEAR LEFT—



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TO THE RIGHT—



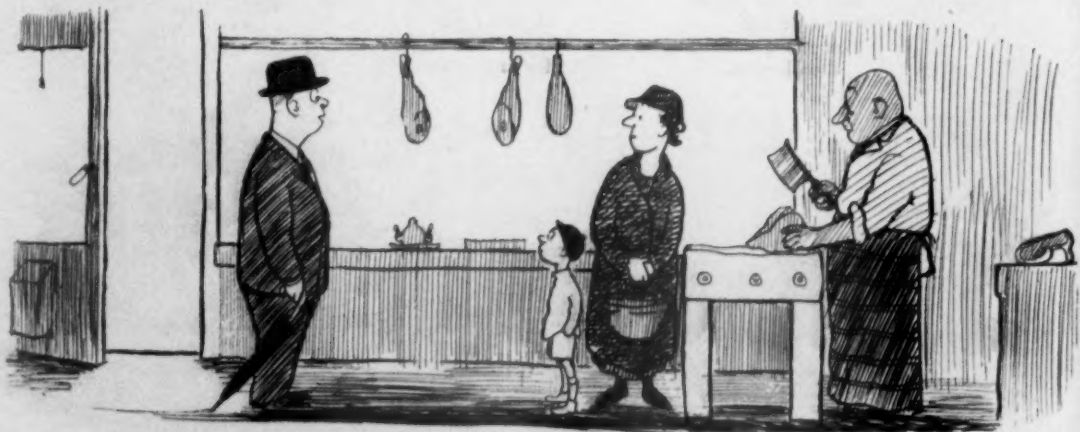
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THEN RIGHT AGAIN—



THEN STRAIGHT ON—



AND BEAR LEFT—



THEN TAKE THE FIRST TURNING
TO THE RIGHT—



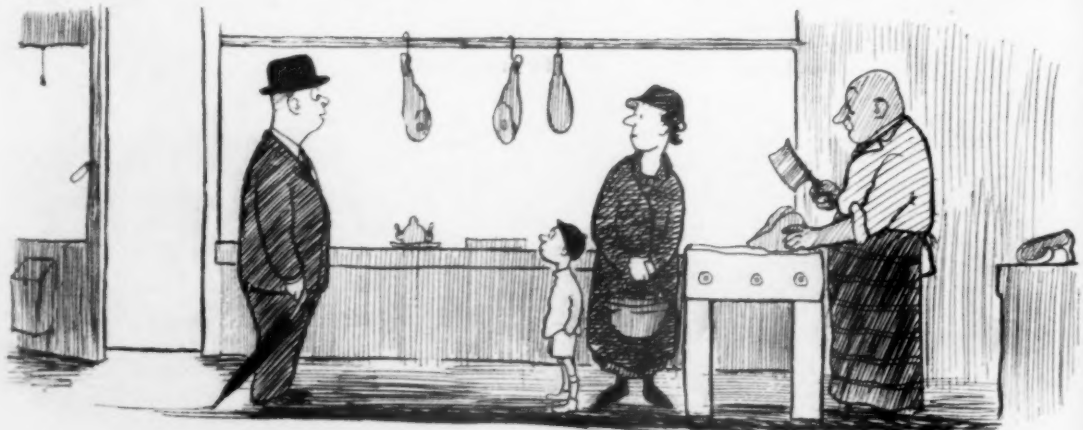
AND THE SECOND TO THE
LEFT—



AND KEEP STRAIGHT ON AS FAR
AS YOU CAN GO—



TURN RIGHT—



AND THERE YOU ARE."



INTERLUDE



THE FIRST SAXOPHONIST



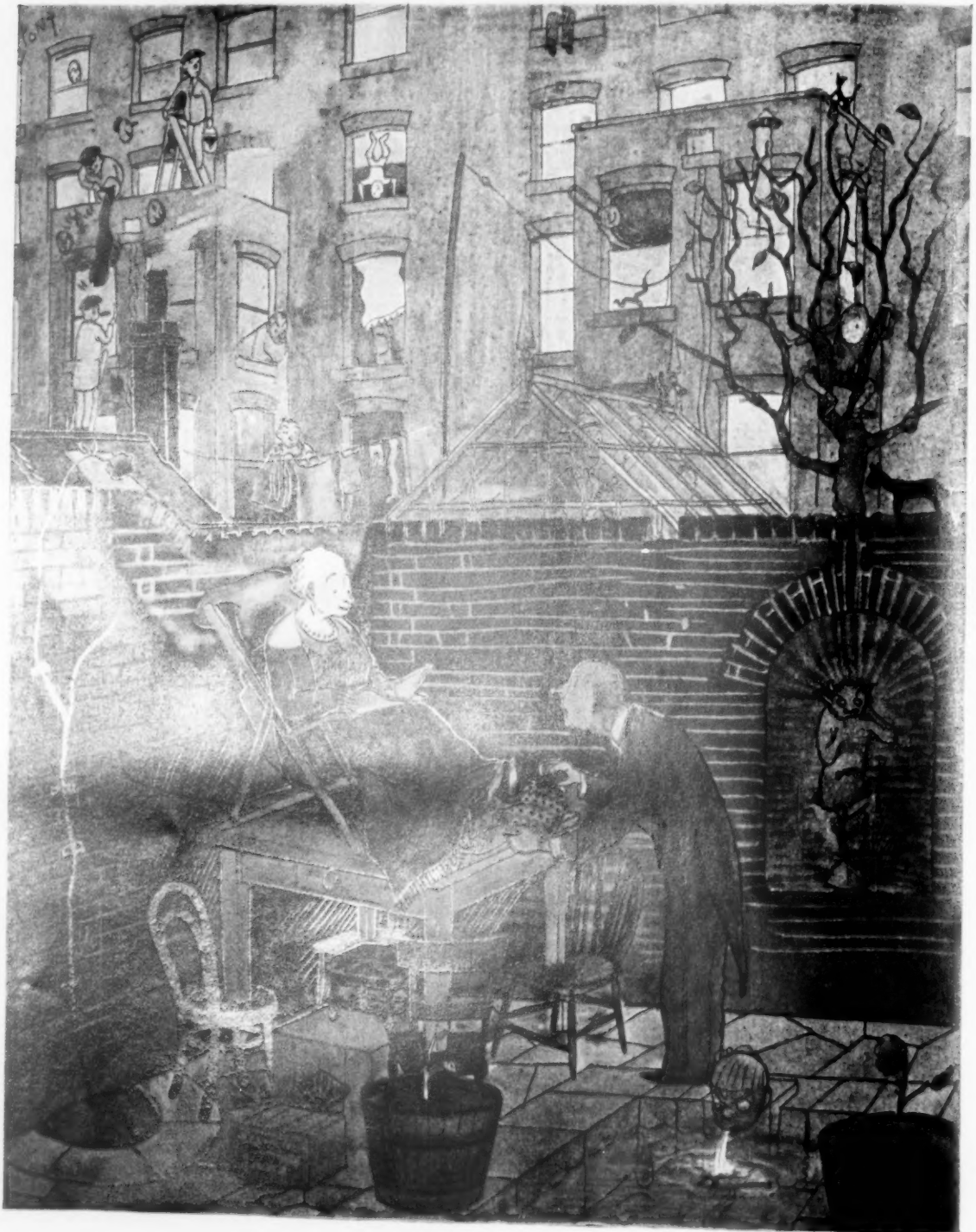
THE EARLIEST SURF-BATHER



MERRY-GO-ROUND. No. 1



MERRY-GO-ROUND. No. 2

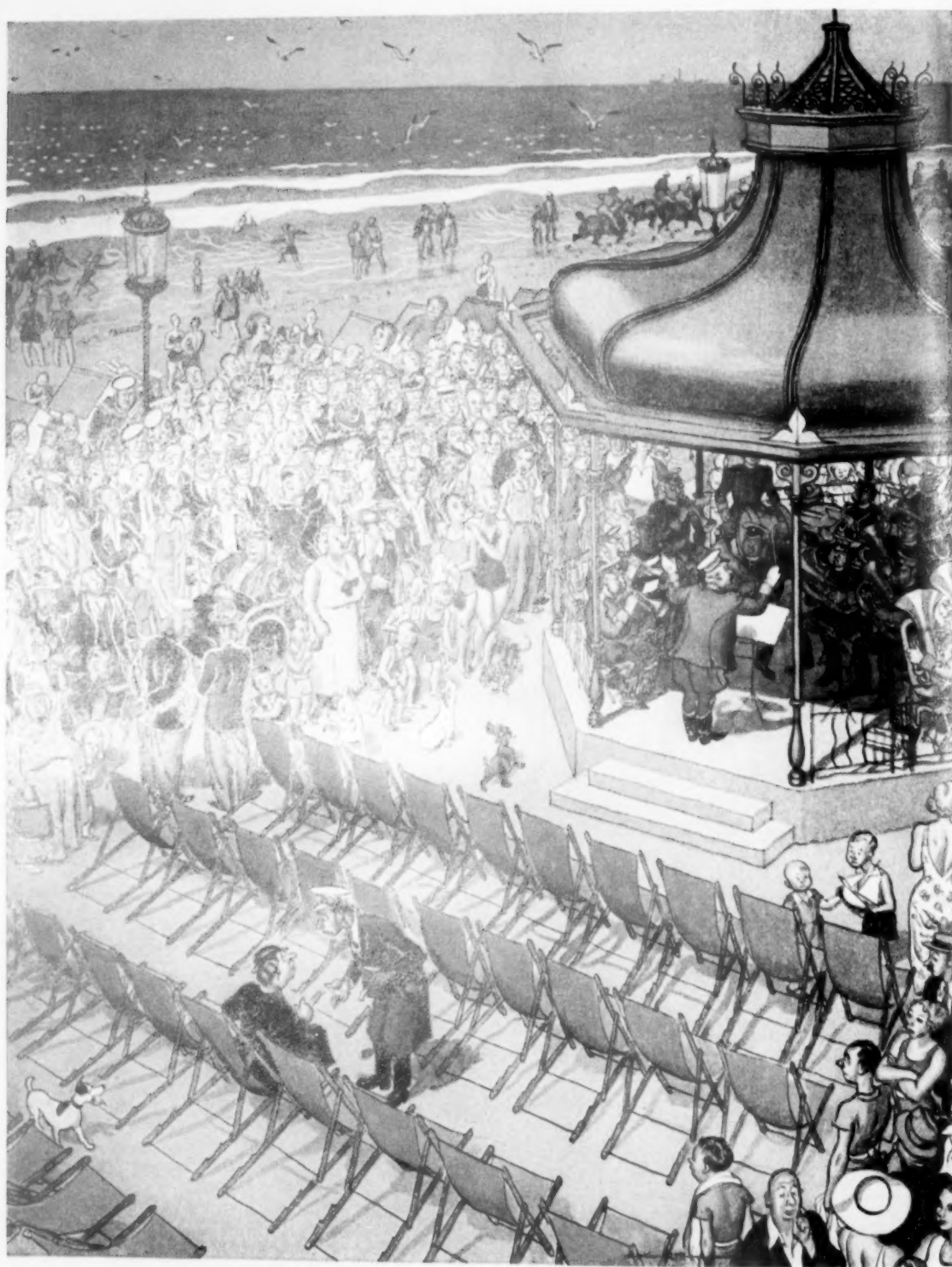


SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW

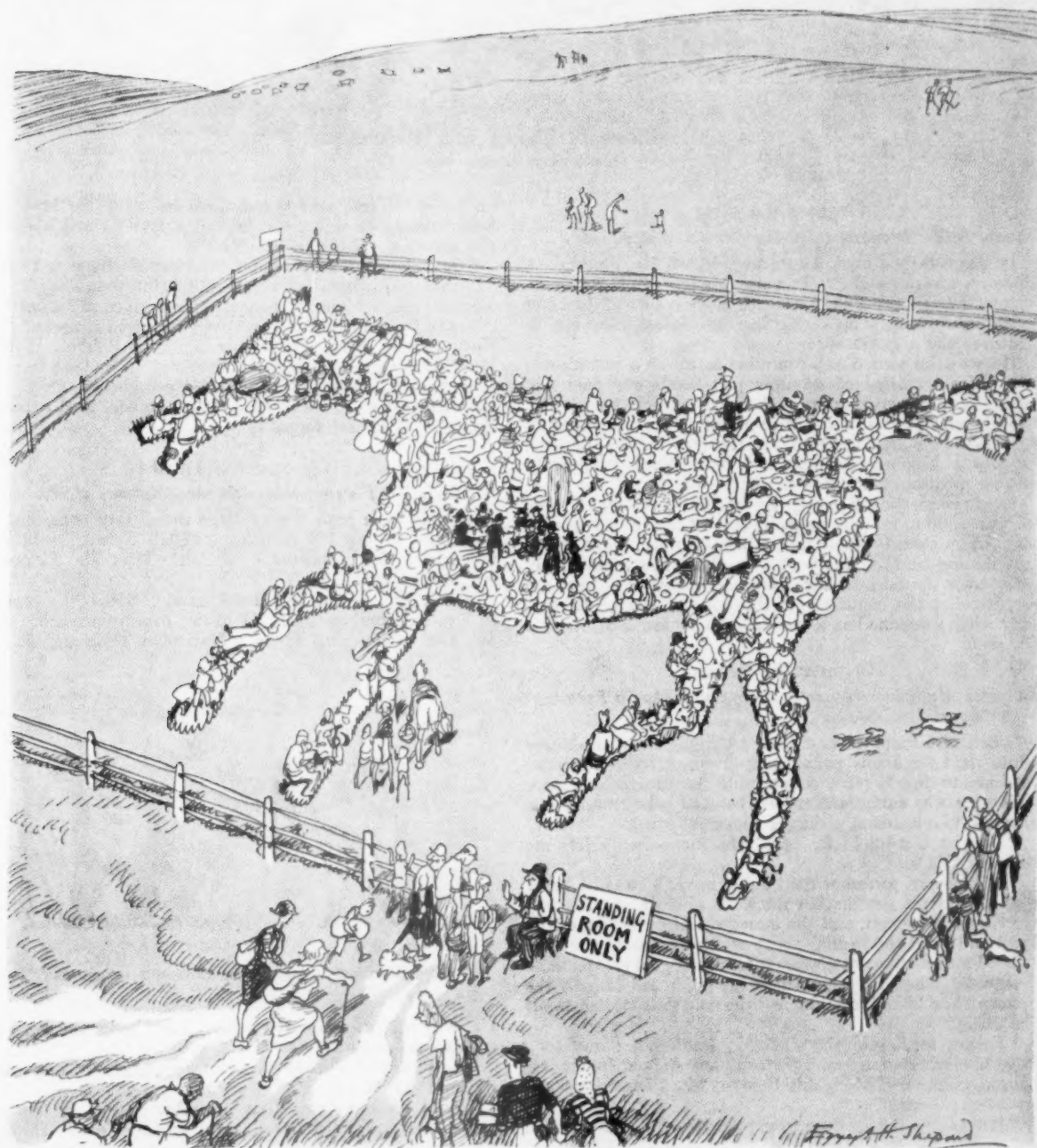
TOWN



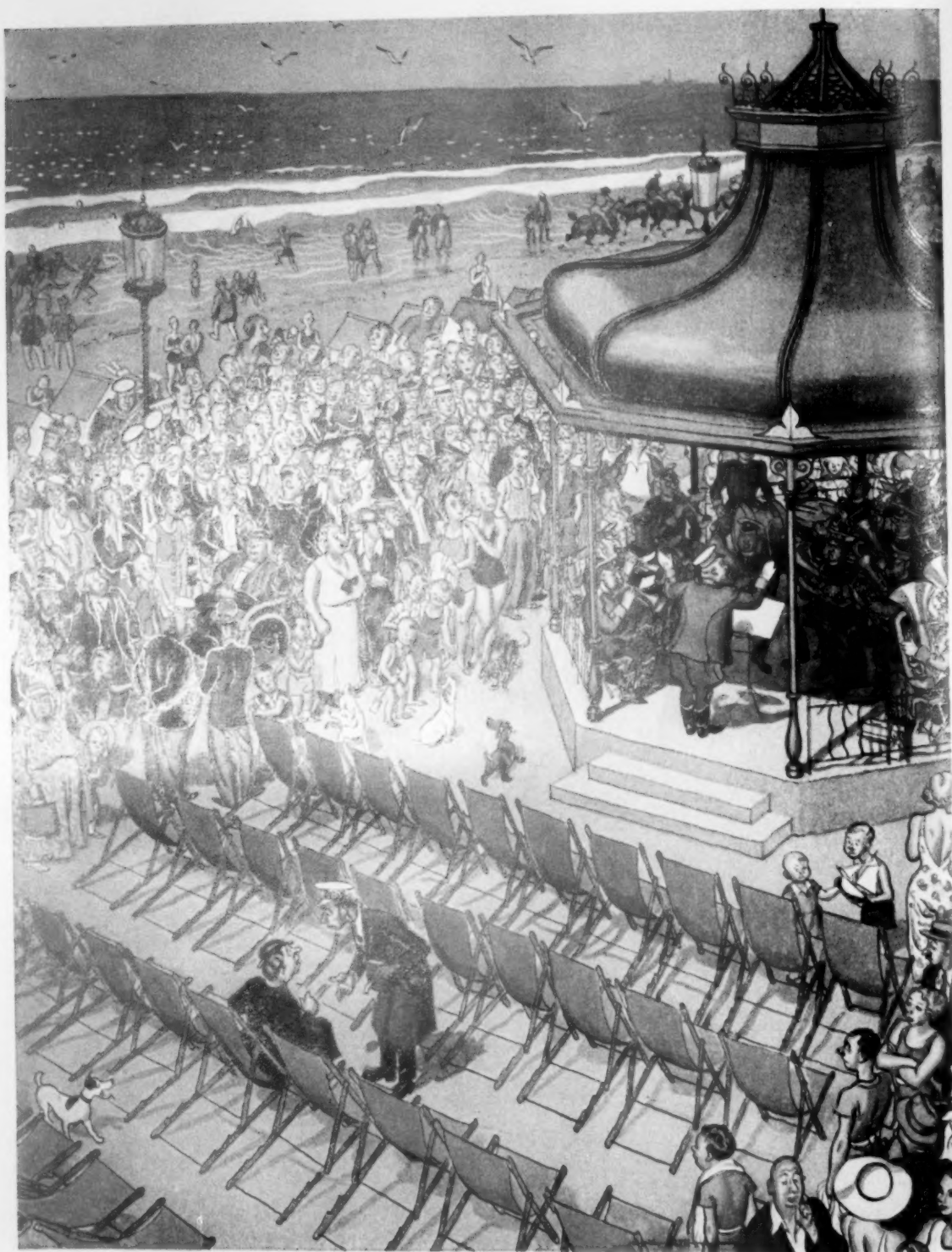
SUNLIGHT AND SHADOW
COUNTRY



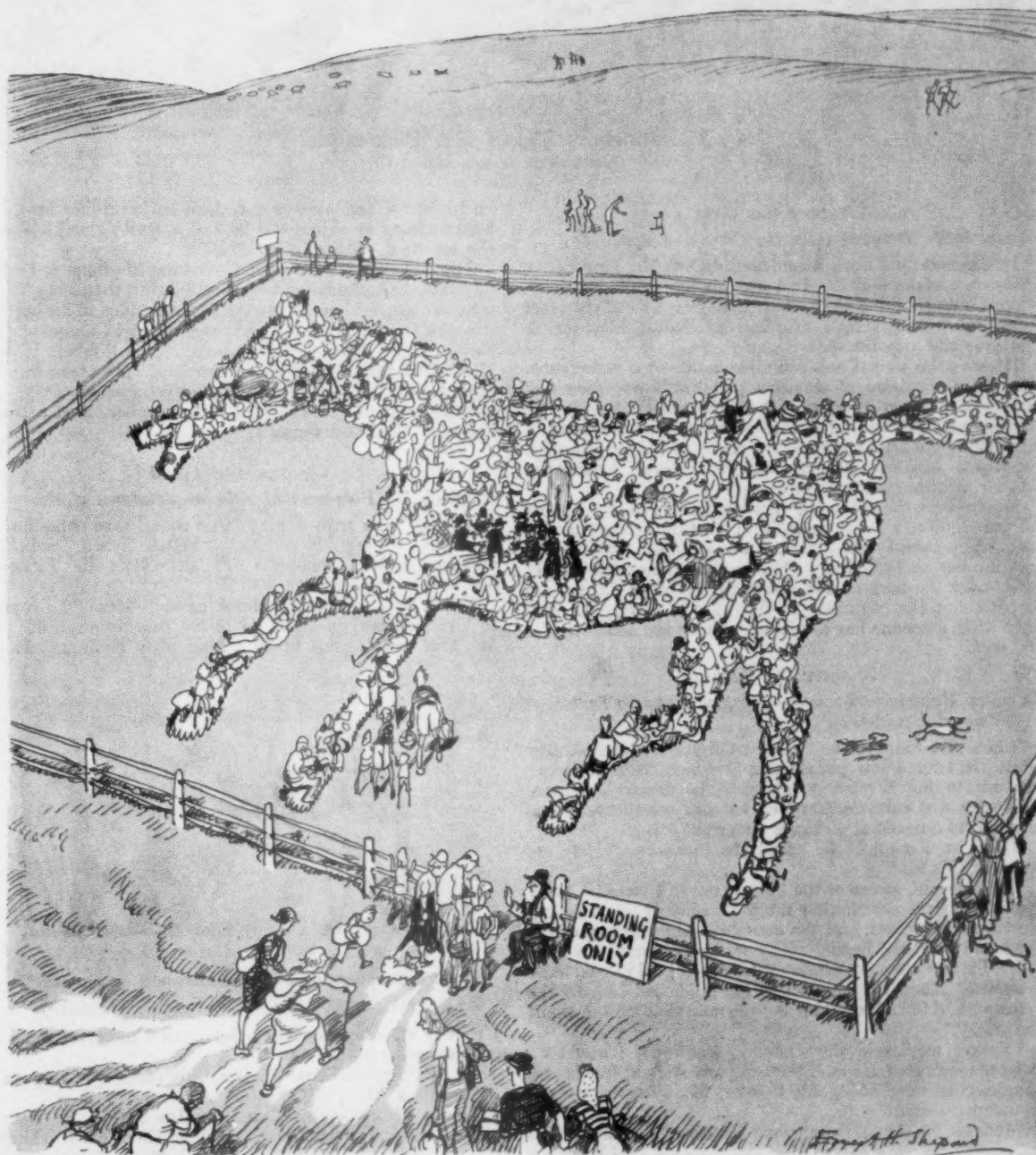
"Oh! . . . Sorry, I thought these seats were free."



OUR BEAUTY-SPOTS



"Oh! . . . SORRY, I THOUGHT THESE SEATS WERE FREE."



OUR BEAUTY-SPOTS



Mr. Pioneers Takes His Picaresque.

(Just another of those novels)

Chapter the First

In which Mr. Pioneers takes leave of his employment.

It is generally a clerk who does this, but Mr. Pioneers O. Pioneers was not a clerk. In a way his job was more monotonous than that of a clerk, though in the course of it he met many interesting people. He had no chance, however, to continue the acquaintance.

He was the second sub-commissionaire at a restaurant: his duties consisted of standing just inside one door and telling people to go out of the other, where the pay-desk was. On the whole it was a job with about as much element of surprise as the drummer's part in RAVEL's *Bolero*. Besides, he was a kindhearted man and he disliked continually having to disappoint and annoy people.

He threw up the job (being very laughably rude to the boss of course; fill in this bit yourself) and set out to seek adventure. You already know that it was summer, and the sun was shining, and the dusty white road stretched temptingly away over the horizon like something or other. These are essentials at the beginning of this kind of novel. It rains only when someone has to die, or puddles are necessary for the plot.

Chapter the Second

In which Mr. Pioneers meets—sorry, encounters a Personage Who, etc.

When Mr. Pioneers had been trudging along the dusty white road for a few paragraphs in which we outline our attitude to the English countryside, he overtook a man. This man was carrying fourteen head of celery under one arm and two heads of pickaxes under the other.

"You want a job?" he asked Mr. Pioneers. "Help me to carry this lot."

Mr. Pioneers, aware of the kind of novel he was in, knew that the man's destination must be somewhere amusing. He therefore agreed, and the man gave him thirteen of the head and both the heads. They walked on amicably.

Mr. Pioneers was not disappointed: their goal proved to be a circus. When they got there his guide led him to the manager and introduced him as "the man that's come about the celery."

"Follow me," said the manager, leading the way to a large tent wherein, he said, the company were at lunch. He paused outside, clearing his throat. Mr. Pioneers cocked an attentive ear.

"It took me a long time to get this team together," said the manager— (He was what they call a Rich Character. One moment while I draw a few characteristics out of the hat . . . Ah, yes: he always pronounced sometimes *somedames*, he had a very large red nose, he couldn't bear heels

on his shoes and always cut them off with his brother's bacon-slicing machine, and he had a fruity chuckle)—said the manager, with a fruity chuckle.

"Somedames," he went on, rubbing his huge red nose, "I wonder whether they were worth it, but then I say Yes—for their names alone they were." He shuffled in his heelless shoes to the tent-opening and sang out eight names: "Olla Bird, Sophie Ayer, Fellah Syeen, Anna Sobbin, Wendy Hurd, Uffa Death, R. Pork, R. Crobbin!" The tune he sang them to was "Cock Robin"—or did you guess?

He turned to Mr. Pioneers with a smile. And a fruity chuckle. (I almost forgot.)

Chapter the Third

In which Mr. Pioneers makes the Acquaintance of, etc.

A small man with a very large round face came out of the tent, wiping his mouth. "Fellah Syeen," said the manager to Mr. Pioneers. "Fellah! Meet Mr. Pioneers, our new celery-shifter."

Fellah Syeen came and shook hands. "Me?" he replied to Mr. Pioneers' question, "I'm not exactly anything yet, but I'm working up to be a Man of a Thousand Faces."



"MR. PIONEERS TWISTED HIS FEATURES OBLIGINGLY."

I'm only up to eight-seventy-three, but I'm gettin' on. You got any suggestions?"

Mr. Pioneers twisted his features obligingly and said, "How about this?"

"Old stuff, old stuff. That's number nine. . . . Thanks all the same. Pardon me, do I smell celery? Thanks. This'll cheer the boys and girls up." He took some, made an extraordinary face, and withdrew into the tent with both.

A loud crunching sound began almost at once and the manager listened to it with an indulgent smile. "Ah," he

observed with a—wait while I turn up my card-index—ah, yes, with a fruity chuckle, “that’ll keep ‘em busy. Follow me,” he added. “I’ll show you your caravan.”

“I’m staying here?” Mr. Pioneers said, startled.

“Sure, don’t you want to? They all do. We keep a special caravan for these little fellers like you that have thrown up their jobs and are wandering about the country. Our last one left yesterday; rescued us from something, I forget what it was. . . . Here you are. Mind the steps.”

And so Mr. Pioneers was introduced to his new home.

Chapter the Fourth

In which our Hero becomes Acquainted with the Mysterious Duties of Celery-Shifter and voyages about This England of Ours with that Incongruous Assemblage of— Oh, you know the kind of thing.

After all that I don’t think we need the chapter, and nobody could be more delighted than I am. Or could you?

Chapter the Fifth

In which Mr. Pioneers Distinguishes Himself by, etc.

One night a week or two later Mr. Pioneers woke up with a start in his caravan. He could not get rid of the feeling that something was wrong. Groping his way to the tiny window, he stared out.

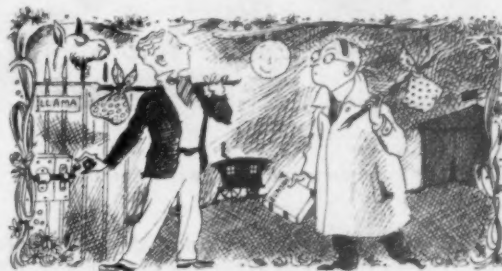
At first all seemed to be as usual (it always does): the moonlit field, with the moonlit caravans in it—the moonlit tree at one corner, the moonlit pump at the other—here and there a few moonlit piles of rubbish. . . . But stay! What was that?

Moonlit as it was, Mr. Pioneers had no difficulty in identifying it as an escaped llama.

He must save his friends from the dreadful fate that would be theirs if, etc. But how was he, etc.?

It was the work of about fourteen moments to fling on a few clothes, open the door, leap down the steps, run to the llama, fling himself at its head (twice—he missed the first time), and lead it back to its cage.

This job done, Mr. Pioneers brushed his hands, panting, and looked round, prepared to say “Oh, it was nothing” to his grateful hosts. However, there seemed to be no spectators. Nobody else had awakened. Of course some wakeful clown, some insomniac trapezist might have been looking on from somewhere, but Mr. Pioneers felt a sudden



“YOU COME MOST CAREFULLY UPON YOUR HOUR.”

disinclination to stay and find out. He had been with the circus so long now that he once more yearned to be independent. He decided to leave now, without good-byes.

It was a beautiful night. The moon . . . (here comes in a lot of stuff about everything’s being moonlit.)

As he went out of the field with his few possessions he realised that he was none too soon, for coming in was a figure who bore every sign of being his successor. Quite plainly here was another little Mr. So-and-So who had left his job and taken to the road.

“You come most carefully upon your hour,” said Mr. Pioneers (whose Culture we have hitherto stifled, so as not to alarm you).

Chapter the Sixth

In which Mr. Pioneers Encounters a Member of the Canine Race, with Some what Unorthodox Results.

The next morning Mr. Pioneers was swinging cheerfully along the high road, after walking all night, when he was met by a little white dog.

“Well, my fine little fellow,” Mr. Pioneers said, “have you come to make friends with me?”

Happily for us the dog was a talking dog. “I should say not, you big sentimentalist,” it replied. “Go and dig yourself a piece of cheese,” and so saying it trotted away, never to return. (Our publisher doesn’t want us to leave this bit in.)

Then comes a lot of stuff about the Open Road, and the joy of life, and the way the birds sing, and so on, but not



“I DON’T LIKE YOU MUCH.”

having three hundred pages to play with in this novel we have to launch right into the next Episode. Plenty of characters must be introduced, for those in this sort of book are often advertised by quantity. Trifling exertions on our part can make them all Rich Characters: you watch.

Chapter the Seventh

In which Mr. Pioneers is Prevailed Upon to Drive a Vehicle.

He had not been walking for very long before a crescendo of clanking and rattling at his back made him aware that he was being overtaken by one of the decrepit motor-cars that infest the highways of fiction. He turned; this one contained an old man and a girl. “Jump in, man, jump in,” said the old man irritably, in a harsh reedy voice. He had steel-rimmed spectacles on his long bony nose and every rattle of the car shook them down towards the tip of it. (How many attributes is that? . . . one, two, three—better have another.) He was chewing what looked like a stick of rhubarb.

Mr. Pioneers jumped in, knowing by instinct that he was expected to drive because the man they had been employing, another little Mr. Whatsname, had succumbed again to wanderlust and left them without a chauffeur. The old man made room by clambering over into the back of the car,

which seemed to be stuffed with rotten turnips and twists and skeins of cotton.

After a few moments the old man called out, "I don't like you much."

"No?"

Silence. Mr. Pioneers tried again: "No?" Still silence. Then the girl said, "You don't know about father, let me explain. Some people won't take No for an answer, but he's different. He won't take No for a question."



"MY FATHER IS A DISAPPOINTED MAN."

She was a pretty girl. (She has to be—there isn't one in the novel so far, and the reader must be reassured.) It's harder to make a pretty girl a Character, but let us do our best. (1) She had very dark hair with a very conspicuous parting in the middle; (2)—no deception at all, I'm taking whatever comes to hand first—she liked to sing and had a taste for Puccini; (3) she had trained a small pig to follow wherever she went, except in the car; (4) she imparted a peculiar long-drawn-out quality to her "a" sounds. (Not very rich? Ah, that's the luck of the draw.)

Chapter the Eighth

In which Mr. Pioneers becomes a Professional Chauffeur and Drives About this England of Ours mostly in the Company of the Charming Daughter of his Employer, learning to Regard her with an affection which, etc.

Just that.

Chapter the Ninth

In which Mr. Pioneers Learns that she can Never be His.

Just that, again. Why? Because if she became his the novel would end too soon, stupid.

Chapter the Tenth

In which our Hero solves a Problem and Takes his Departure.

Just about the time when the reader would be getting tired of this episode it occurred to Mr. Pioneers to feel independent again. At the same moment the girl gave him an explanation of something by which he had long been puzzled. What did the old man do all the time in his laboratory with the turnips and other oddments that Mr. Pioneers drove about in the car to fetch?

"My father is a disappointed man," the girl said sadly. "He's the inventor of synthetic rhubarb. It's very good, you can't tell it from the real thing, but there's no money in it. He was misled. He didn't realise that hardly anybody wants to buy even real rhubarb."

"That's right," snapped the old man.

They all brooded about this for a time. Then Mr. Pioneers thought of something.

"How about trying to make it *pleasanter* than real rhubarb?" he suggested.

A wild surmise was what the girl and her father looked at each other with. (Sorry.)

"Our troubles are over!" cried the old man, and he hurried away to his laboratory.

The girl looked at Mr. Pioneers with her eyes full of gratitude. Even her pet pig (mustn't forget our characterisation) looked at him with eyes full of gratitude. "How," she said, "ca-a-an I ever thank you?"

"Think nothing of it," said Mr. Pioneers, and cutting a notch in his faithful ashplant to mark the solving of another problem he set out once more with a sigh upon the open road.

[EPISODE OMITTED: Chapter the Eleventh and Chapter the Twelfth are about Mr. Pioneers' encounter with a wood-cutter and his three sons, all homicidal lunatics. The wood-cutter is a Rich Character too: long hair, beard, piercing beige eyes, nose with a blob on the end, booming voice, eyebrows trained up matchsticks, habit of taking swipes at people with his axe. Mr. Pioneers solves their Problem by explaining to them all how wonderful the world is, and when he trudges away he leaves them singing "Sweet Adeline."]

Chapter the Thirteenth

In which Mr. Pioneers finds a Warm Welcome at an Inn.

One day, when Mr. Pioneers was in a country pub having a pint with some of the money we have never so far hinted was in his possession, he noticed the stout landlady looking at him thoughtfully. "Want a job? Will you serve be'ind the bar?" she asked.

Mr. Pioneers said he would. And so began a period that—



"LEFT THEM SINGING 'SWEET ADELINE.'"

a period which—anyway, you know the sort of period I mean. The one that teaches people more of the Real England than they ever knew before. Paragraphs about the Great University of Life, where all the sentences begin with "and": "And he learned so-and-so" (*full-stop*). "And so-and-so" (*full-stop*). "And it seemed to him that he was learning so-and-so" (*full-stop*). Real Fine Writing, by gosh—the sort of thing the vested interests won't award the Hawthornden Prize to.

There are no adventures in this episode. It's just put in to show that we can be as good as the highbrows and do without sensational action if we try. Besides, there has to

be a quiet period during which we can work off all that stuff about the Real (i.e., agricultural. Are ya listenin', Birmingham, Manchester, Blackpool, Durham, Newcastle, and points north, south, east and west?) England. Here it has been omitted, as a favour to the reader, and because we are afraid he will skip it anyway.

[EPISODE OMITTED: Chapter the Fourteenth and Chapter the Fifteenth are about a country newspaper. Calling on the editor, Mr. Pioneers finds that the only reporter is ill, and is invited to replace him. He agrees and has some wistfully sentimental—no, some comic—wait a minute (eeny, meeny, miney, mo)—yes, I was right, some comic adventures. He reports a comic flower-show and a comic A.R.P. black-out and meets as many Rich Characters as we can get into the space—a comic fat mayor, a comic new-rich landowner, a laughable pretty pair of mischievous girl twins, and a number of comic shopkeepers whom by a comic trick he persuades to advertise in the paper. The editor asks him to stay on even when the reporter comes back, but the wanderlust has him in its grip again and away he goes, cutting another notch in his stick.]

Chapter the Sixteenth

In which Mr. Pioneers takes up Agriculture and, etc.

One day Mr. Pioneers, walking across a field, met a gentleman farmer and had a discussion with him. The farmer happened to have lost the manager of his estate. "Could you manage an estate?" asked the farmer hopefully. (How all these temporarily-depleted communities would have got along if Mr. Pioneers hadn't taken to the road I can't imagine. The Labour Exchange, I suppose.)

"I could try," Mr. Pioneers said.

"That's the spirit," cried the farmer. "Things are so bad, I couldn't pay you much. . . . But I still have a little money left. I attribute this entirely to my habit of tearing the

blotting-paper out of my cheque-book and leaving the cheque behind."

"But you can't do that more than once per book?"

"My books are specially made, with twenty-five sheets of blotting-paper and one cheque."

And so began for Mr. Pioneers a period . . . (Just another of those periods. He learned about the Real England again.)

One of the Rich Characters he met was the bacon-slicing brother of the manager of the circus whom he met in Chapter the Second. You can't call this a coincidence—there never was anything more deliberate. The idea is to make you believe we have a plot about somewhere.

Chapter the Seventeenth

In which we take leave of our Hero.

In due course Mr. Pioneers left—

But it's time to end the novel. Autumn's here, and we shouldn't know what to do with bad weather in a story like this.

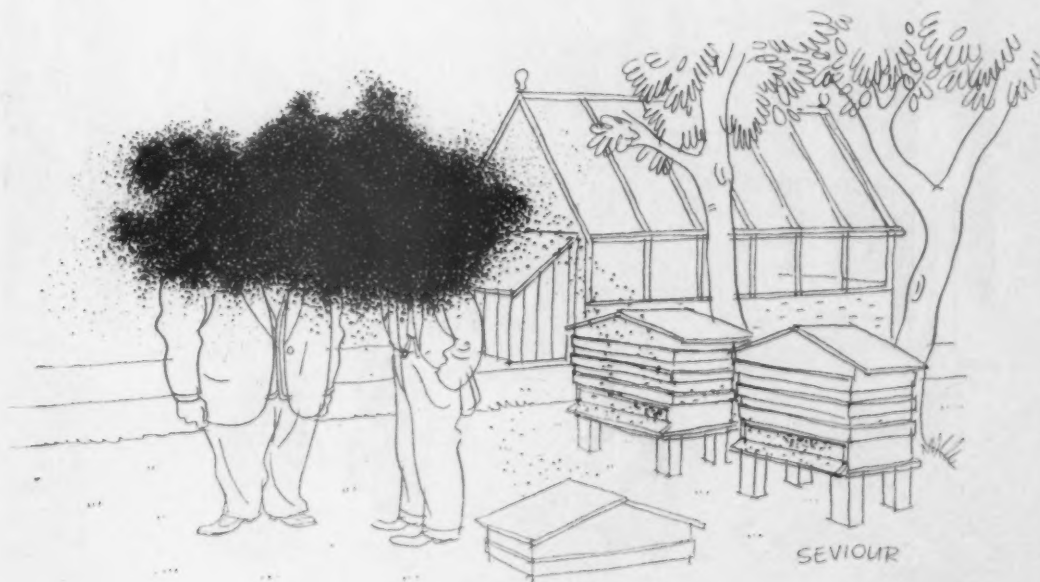
[There's a little difficulty now. Ought we to leave Mr. Pioneers vanishing over the horizon into the sunset like Charlie Chaplin, or back in a much better job where he is able to order his former boss about? The latter is the obvious Wish-Fulfilment note to please the Average Reader, but the former leaves the way open for a sequel. Yes, and perhaps it will soften down the highbrow reviews a little.

Right. There he goes, an insignificant little figure, vanishing over the horizon into the sunset.

Ah, life! How incomparably rich he has discovered it to be! How many extraordinary characters it has been his good fortune to meet! How many? Let's see—one, two . . .

H'm. Not so good. Our publisher will probably complain. Maybe in the next edition we can squeeze in another Episode with half-a-dozen more.

R. M.



"AND TALKING OF BEES . . ."

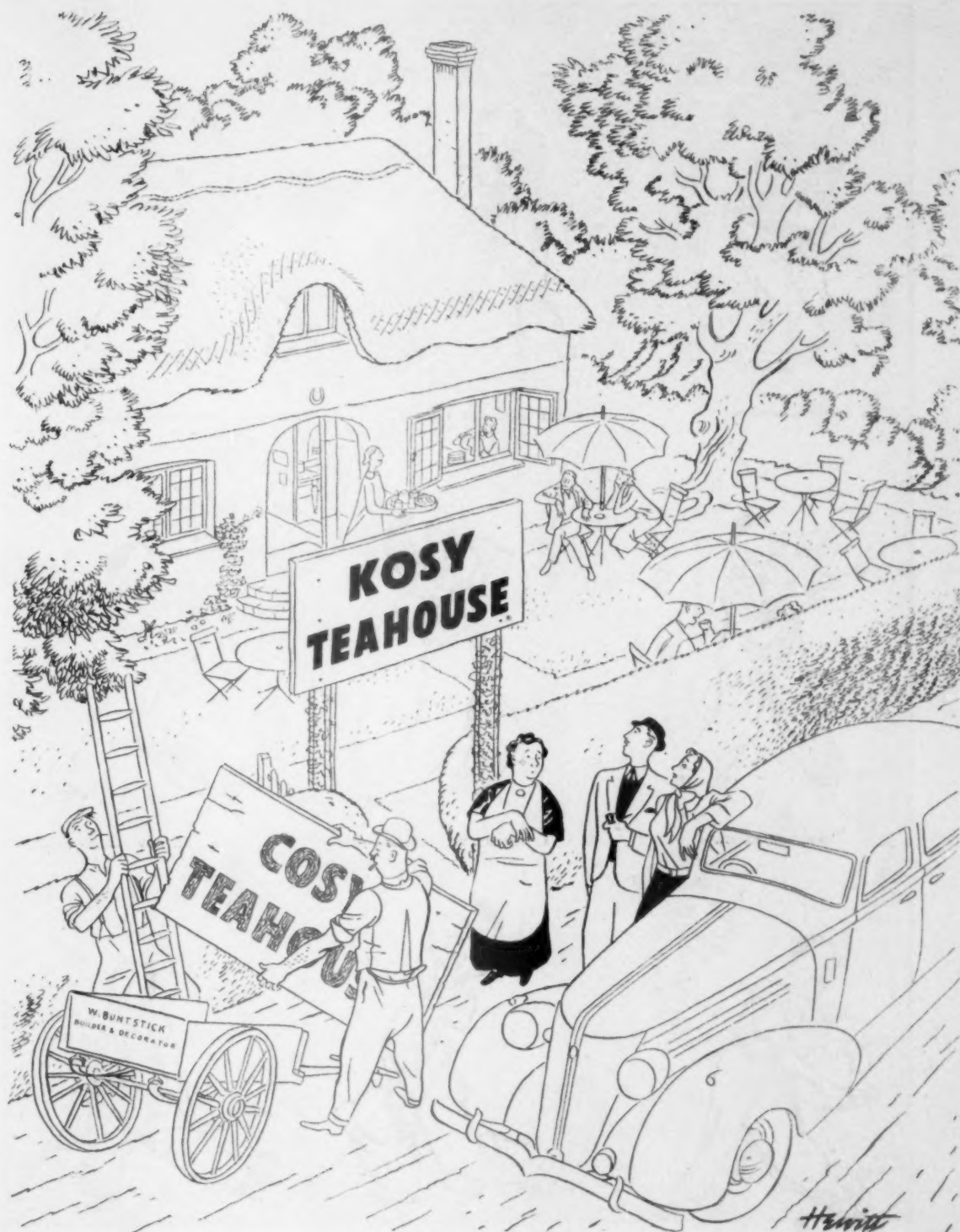
ECHOES FROM THE PAST



"WELL, BOYS—NOW THAT THE CEREMONY IS OVER I'M GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE PADDLE ON MY OWN."



"YOU MAY TELL THE DUC DE PIERREFONDS-VILLEFRANCHE THAT I WISH HE WOULD BUY A GARDEN-ROLLER FOR HIMSELF."



"WE CAN'T AFFORD TO STAND STILL, YOU KNOW, SIR."

THE HOLIDAY SWING



GRIP IT YOUR OWN WAY—



STAND HOW YOU LIKE—



HIKE IT UP WITH YOUR RIGHT—



COCK THE ELBOW—



AND HERE WE ARE, ALL SET—



FOR THE DOWNWARD PATH.



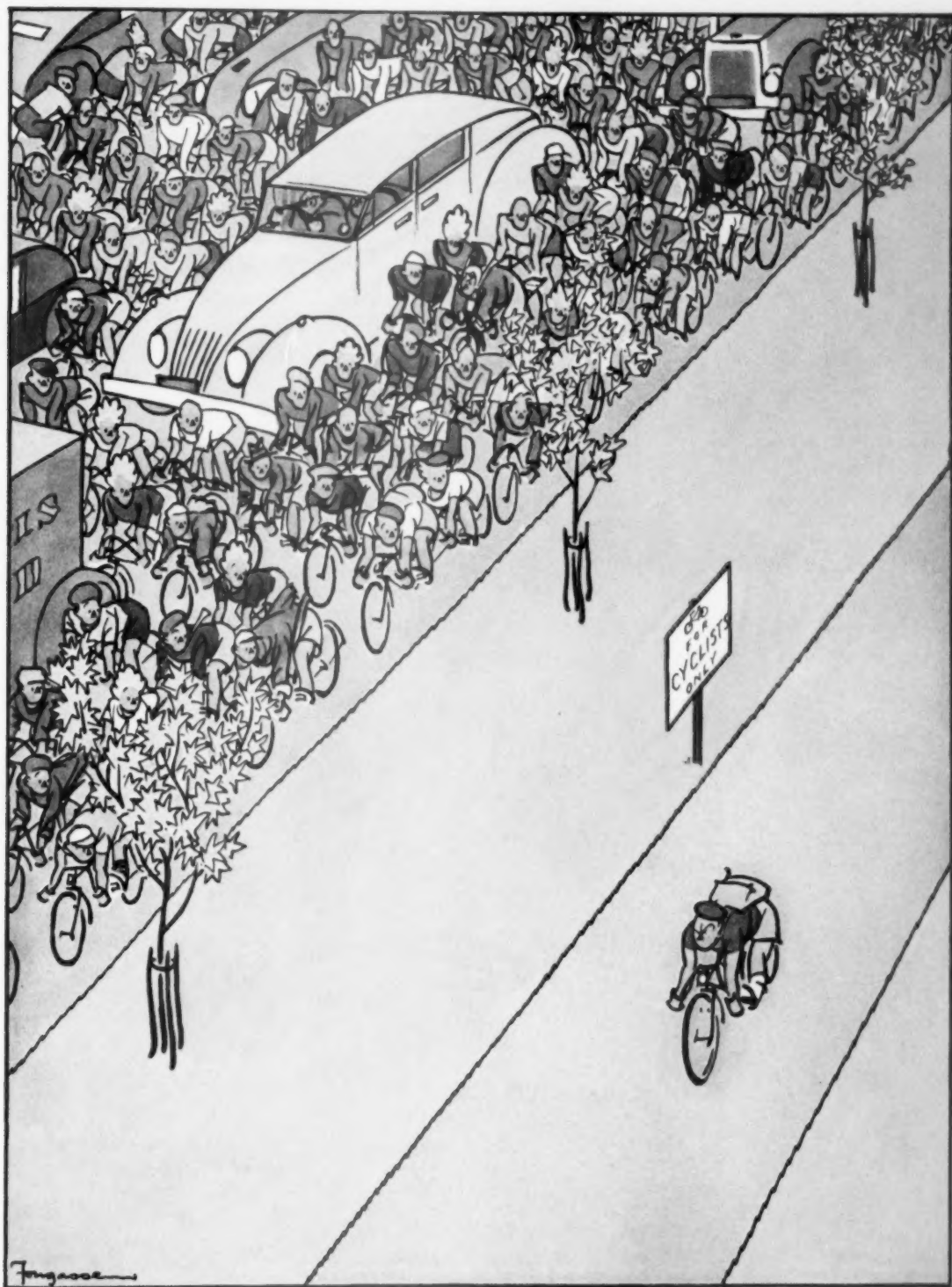
JUST BEFORE IMPACT—



THROW THE HEAD LAUGHINGLY UP—



THEN RELAX (AND NOW LOOK AT THE BALL).



"Coo, look—there's a cyclist!"

THE HOLIDAY SWING



GRIP IT YOUR OWN WAY—



STAND HOW YOU LIKE—



HIKE IT UP WITH YOUR RIGHT—



COCK THE ELBOW—



AND HERE WE ARE, ALL SET—



FOR THE DOWNWARD PATH.



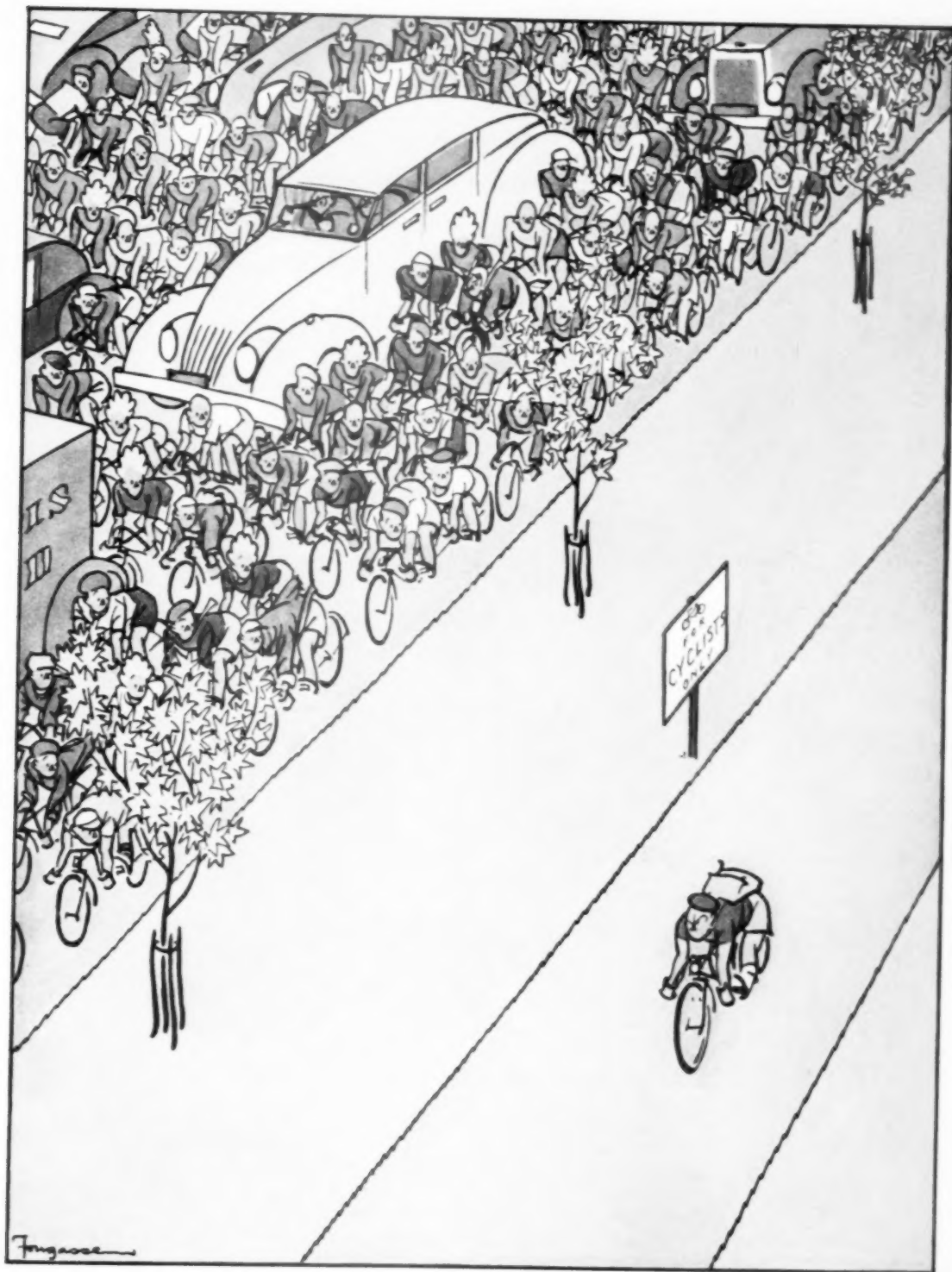
JUST BEFORE IMPACT—



THROW THE HEAD LAUGHINGLY UP—



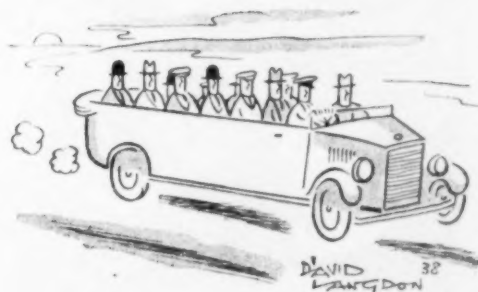
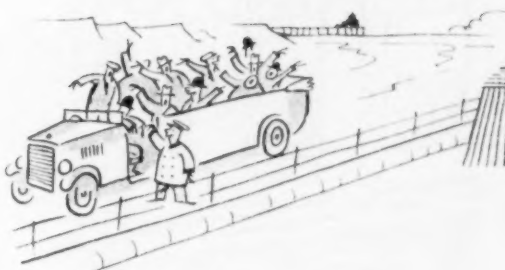
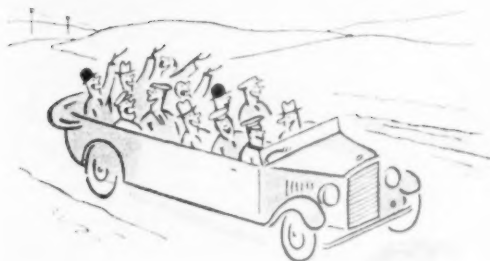
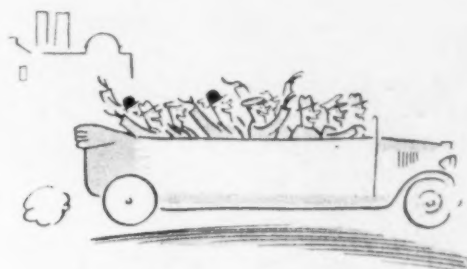
THEN RELAX (AND NOW LOOK AT THE BALL).



"COO, LOOK—THERE'S A CYCLIST!"

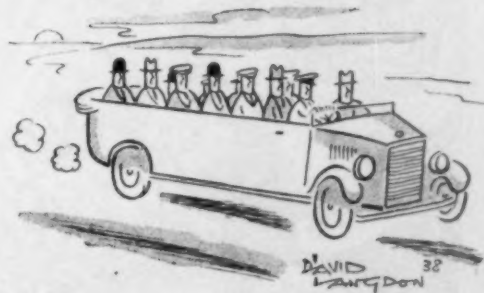
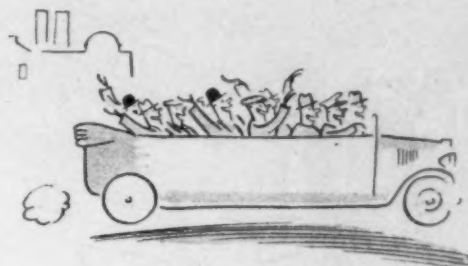


"HERE WE ARE, OLD BOY—THE FINEST VIEW IN ENGLAND; BUT KEEP IT TO YOURSELF—IT RUINS THE PLACE TO ADVERTISE IT."





"HERE WE ARE, OLD BOY—THE FINEST VIEW IN ENGLAND; BUT KEEP IT TO YOURSELF—IT RUINS THE PLACE TO ADVERTISE IT."





Sillince

"OH, BUT WE'RE NOT SO FERT WONDERFUL—REALLY!"



HERE 's a tale of times departed
When White Men had scarcely started
To populate the Western spaces
With their pale and spotty faces.
Life in them days was quite tough,
Folks would act exceedin' rough,
An' the only form of law
Was bein' quick upon the draw.

The focal point of Bunker's toon



Was then of course the gin saloon;
There the cowboys used to drink,
There the glasses used to clink,
There the wildest scenes took place,



An' life was lived at sech a pace!

In the room behind the bar
Hank, the keeper—door ajar—



Sits and chuckles with delight
At this alcoholic sight—
Chuckles too to think that he
Is just upon the point to be
Wed to May, the local beauty.
Why? Because it was her duty.
Since her aged granddad couldn't
Pay the rent or else he wouldn't
She must sacrifice her life.
He had said, "Become my wife
And I will let your grandpa stay.
Leave the rent. He needn't pay!"

At this moment, as we watch
An' all the crowd consumes its Scotch,



The lovely May comes into sight
With dragging footsteps, features white.
On an old gent's arm she leans
(Long white hair and wrinkled jeans).
Close behind them treads a vision:
It's the preacher from the Mission.
Through the long saloon they pass—
Grandpa, preacher, lovely lass.

In the room behind the bar
The door no longer stands ajar.



Hi! But half-a-minute, boys!
What's that sweet familiar noise?
It is! *It is!*—the welcome beat
Of some pure-bred horse's feet.
A murmur passes through the crowd,
No one cares to speak out loud.
Each one asks if it can be
Quick Shot Walt, the single he,
Who can save their local beauty
From the fate she calls her duty,
Arriving in the nick of time
To prevent the shocking crime.



Over hill and over dale
The rhythm beats upon the trail.



Now they're splashing through the
river,
Customers begin to shiver.



Now they're rattlin' over rocks;



The bar-tender pulls up his socks.
Now there seems to be no sound;
The broncho must have left the ground,
Leaping high to leave below



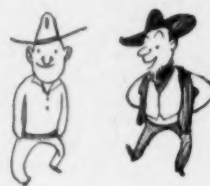
A disconcerted buffalo.
Time to time each listener harks
As the rider's pistol barks
And sounds of shots ring through the
hills



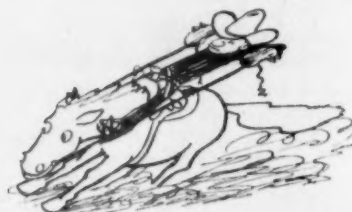
As Indians by the score he kills.



Now he's coming up the hill.
Will he make it? (Yes, he will.)
Now he's coming down the street.



Excitement is at fever-heat,
Nearer, nearer come the beats;
—Customers have left their seats—



Front of the saloon they halt;



A man bounds in. It is! It's Walt!



The fellows raise a hearty cheer.
(Several offer pints of beer.)
Oh, hurry, man, and cross the floor
And open wide the fateful door.
But Walter needs no second bidding.



"Here be I to stop that widding."
Then he kicks the door wide open
(He's strong and good at cattle-ropin').



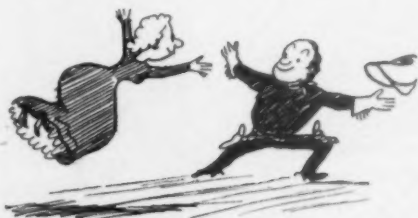
"Stop, stop," he cries, "stop, stop,
stop, stop!"



I'm just ashamed of you, Grandpop,
To let things come to such a pass,
To think you'd sacrifice the lass



To such a man in such a way,
It's fair disgraceful, I *must* say."
Then the girl with radiant face



Leaps into his strong embrace.
The owner of the bar is quite
Dumbfounded by the loving sight.



"Hands off my bride!" he cries at last.
But Walter chuckles thick and fast.
"Your bride? *My* bride!" exclaims
this Walter;
"For you no matrimonial halter.
No, Sir, you is just plain bad,
And therefore (none will think it sad)
I'm going to shoot you full of holes
From feet ter crown, from head ter
soles."

Promptly Walter draws his gun,



Fires the bullets, every one.
..... as he'd said

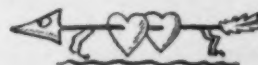


Down the villain falls; he's dead.
"Hurrah! Hurrah!" the cowboys cried,
"We always was on Walter's side."



Now cried Walter, "Carry on,
Preacher dear, and make us wan."

Which proves that though the West
was tough
They still had lots of time for lough.

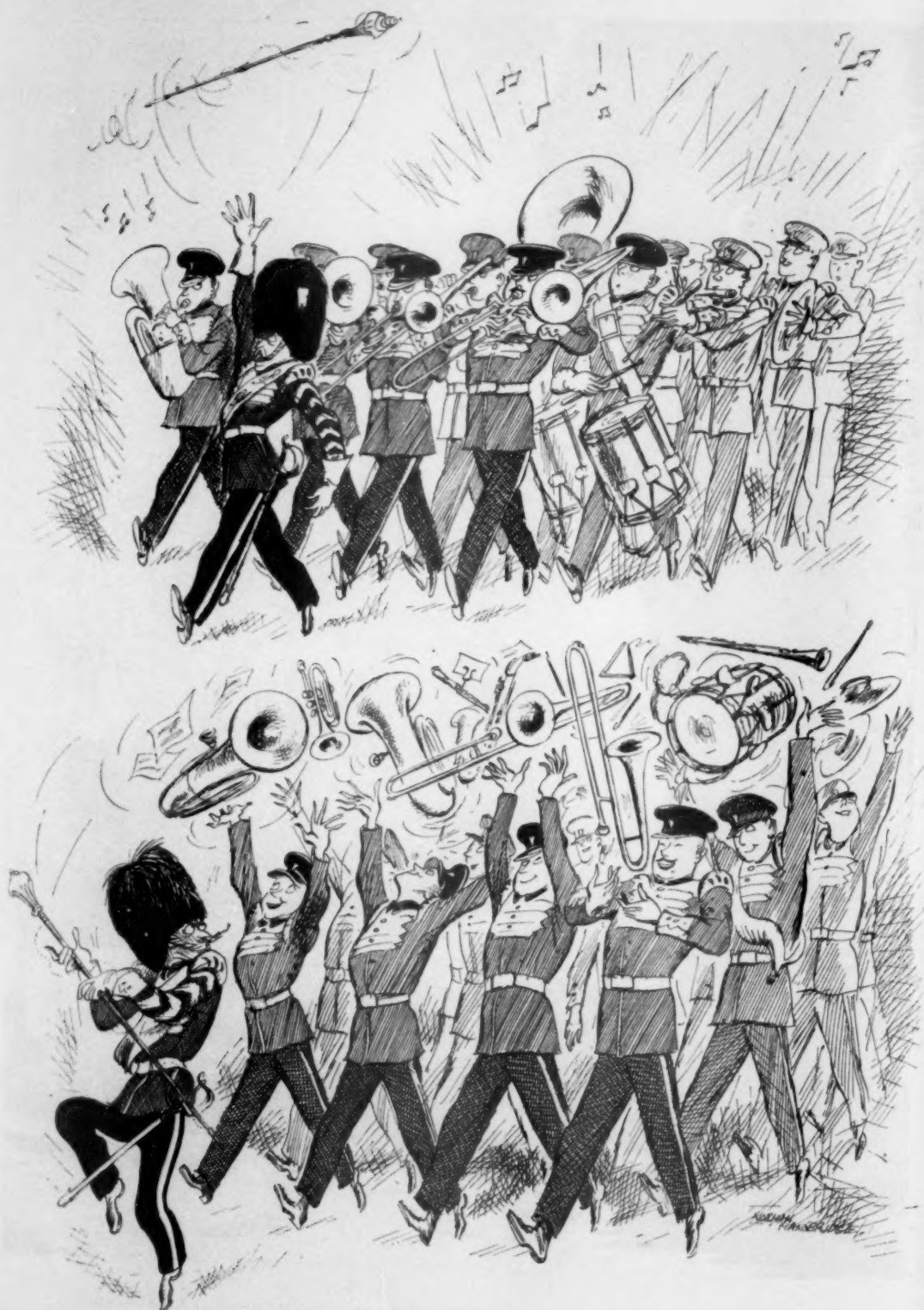


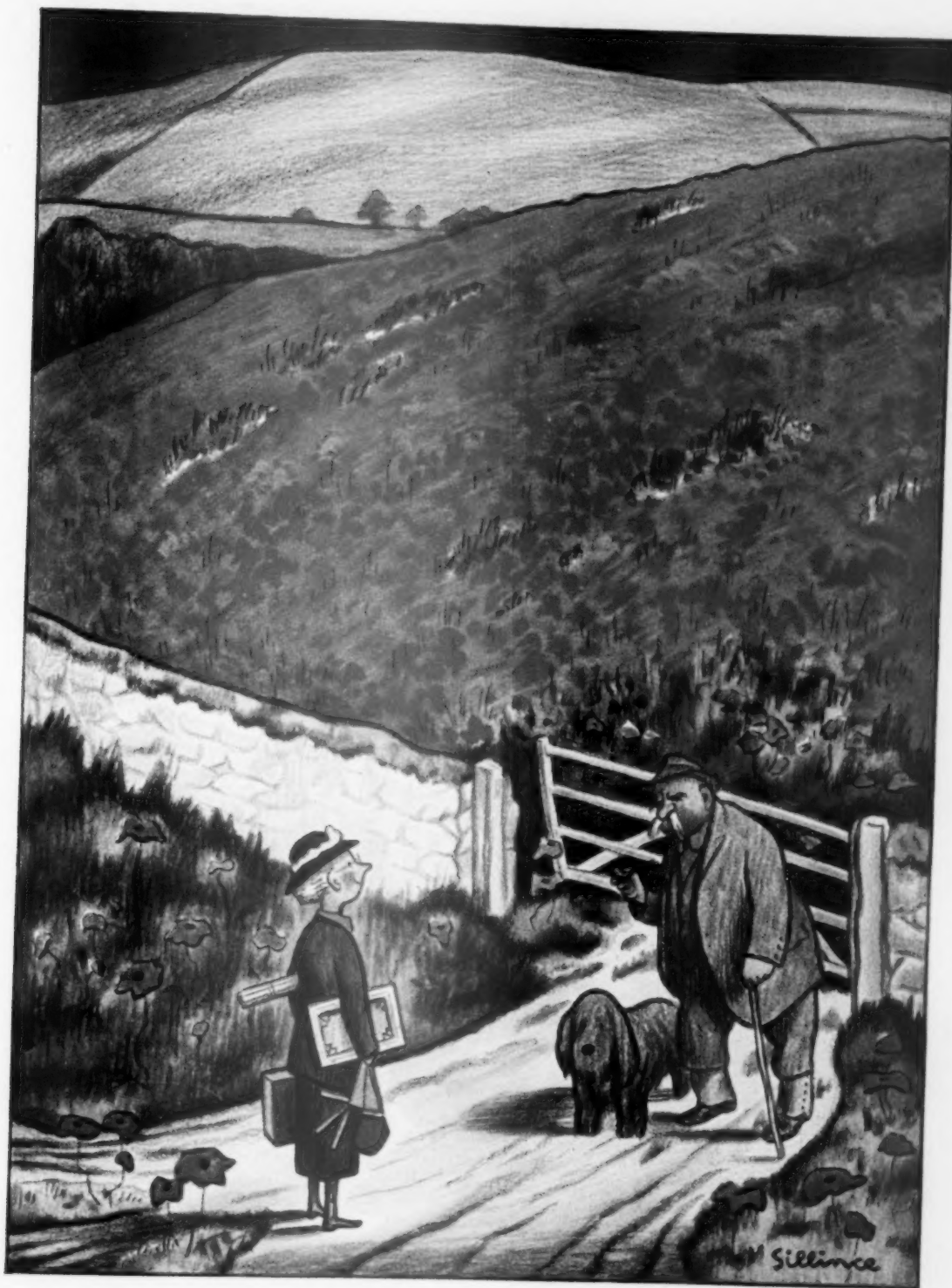


WASP



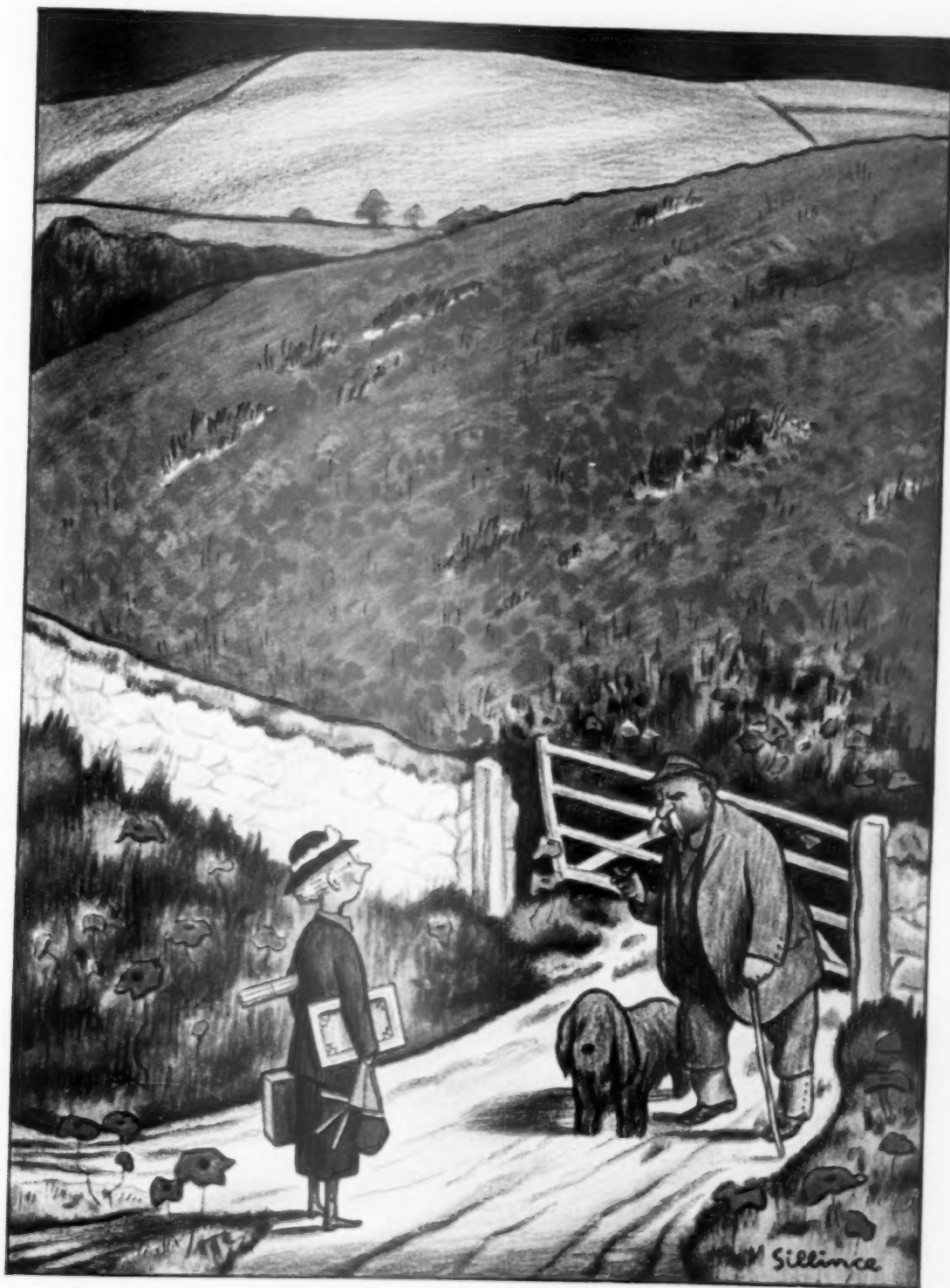
"WELL, IF THIS IS WARGRAVE, ALL I CAN SAY IS IT'S CHANGED SINCE WE MOORED UP LAST NIGHT."





"I'M SURE YOURS IS *QUITE* THE PRETTIEST FIELD IN THE DISTRICT."





"I'M SURE YOURS IS QUITE THE PRETTIEST FIELD IN THE DISTRICT."



"HOW FAR THAT LITTLE HEADLIGHT THROWS HIS BEAMS!"

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Librarian's Joy

"HAVE you got any more about the Industrial North, coal-mines or blast-furnaces or anything? Oh, that . . . Is it squalid enough, do you think? I want something that starts with a furious gale raging in a soot-laden valley of the Pennines. And the heroine *must* have a bad cough, and my husband would always much rather he was terribly unjustly treated and lost his job. And he insists that the heroine should have a baby in very unfortunate circumstances at least every other chapter. No, I'm afraid this one is no good; I see in one place one of these characters goes to the South of France.

He'll never read that. He never really cares for books when anyone comes south of about Doncaster.

"Hasn't CRONIN written *anything* lately? You're sure? Well, this might do, if you're quite certain there isn't a happy marriage in it anywhere? And none of the children turn out at all satisfactorily? And is there an epidemic or a mining disaster? There is? Well, that's one settled. I'll have that.

"Then we've an uncle coming to stay, and I must have something for him. It isn't that he's difficult to please, but there's one stipulation he does make. He won't read any book

in which the word sex is mentioned. And it mustn't be Travel. Or Essays. Or Biography. Or Belles Lettres. Or Philosophy or Science or Religion or anything. Just something with plenty of *story*. No, I'm afraid he's had *Alice in Wonderland*. But I expect you can easily find something, Miss Tomlinson, so will you send it up by to-morrow night, please?

"And I *do* want something for myself. I'm really very easy to please; the only thing I do rather stipulate is that it should be about Old Etonians. Somehow I don't seem to care for any other kind of book."

Charivaria

ACCORDING to the captain of a liner, missing the first three meals on board will often ward off seasickness. Missing the whole boat is of course a surer method still.

★ ★ ★

An Australian tames all kinds of fish. He is confident that, given the opportunity, he could induce even an octopus to put out friendly feelers.

★ ★ ★

A man complained to the London magistrates that his neighbour's dog howled from morning till night. Still he now has the satisfaction of knowing that the longest day is over.

★ ★ ★

Things That Might Have Been More Tactfully Expressed

"MISS COURTNEIDGE HELPS AT FIRE
FIVE PEOPLE INJURED"

Sunday Times.

★ ★ ★



An astronomer asserts that the end of the world is insight. It seems a pity, because prosperity is still just round the corner.

★ ★ ★

"Practically every vertebrate wears less in summer," asserts a back-to-nature enthusiast. A notable exception is the cricket umpire.

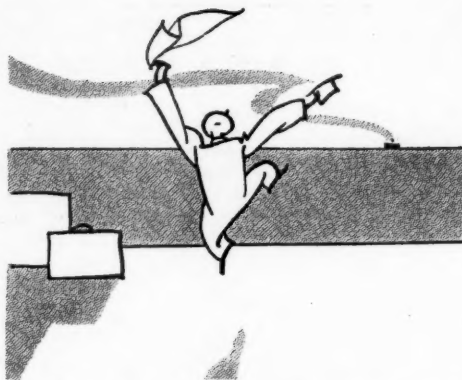
★ ★ ★

"Young couple desire Lift Budapest or Riviera, July 18-31: share expenses."—*Advt. in "The Times."*

What about the proceeds?

★ ★ ★

In a recent court case the magistrate allowed a brewer's name to be written on paper. In evidence of course he was merely referred to as Mr. XXX.



An entomologist says that wasps have a wonderful homing instinct. The trouble is they don't give way to it often enough.

★ ★ ★

"Stamps all kinds urgently wanted."

Advt.

Has he tried farther down the counter?

★ ★ ★

"Is there a word describing a person who chalks messages on walls?" asks a newspaper correspondent. Well, there's "Fascist."

★ ★ ★

Many of our best-dressed men, we are told, are now going to France for their hats. Recent high winds on the South Coast are said to be responsible.

★ ★ ★

"I profited greatly by the advice a Harley Street doctor gave me," writes a novelist. And so, we imagine, did the Harley Street doctor.

★ ★ ★

"Quite a number of superstitions are attached to bees," remarks an apiarist. To sit on a swarm, for instance, is believed to be a sign that you will leave shortly on a long journey.

★ ★ ★

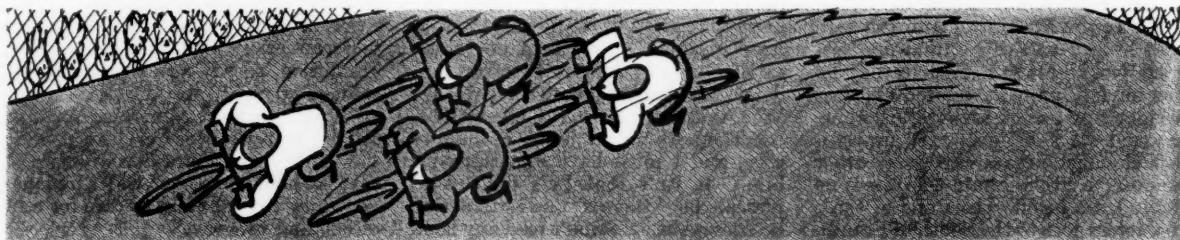
"What a joy it is to see a hazel tree covered with clusters of nuts! What greater joy can there be than to pick the clusters of two, then of ten, then of four, five and six nuts?"

Women's Magazine.

Clusters of three are good fun, too.

★ ★ ★

When he became engaged a prominent dirt-track racer said that he had promised his future wife that he would give up his dangerous profession. And go straight in future?





THE YELLOW RIVER, OR MIGHTIER THAN MARS

E. V. L.

A short appreciation of Edward Verrall Lucas, who died on Sunday, June 26th, appeared in all but the earlier copies of last week's issue. To us, who worked with him, his death means the loss of a delightful companion, a true and generous friend and an ever-faithful servant of the paper. He lived, as he wrote, with ease and charm and kindliness, and in his many books and essays he penned his own most true and lasting memorial. The following recollections are from a member of the Staff who knew him intimately both in his early days and throughout his long and happy association with *Punch*.

ONE evening in the middle nineties I went to a house in Cowley Street, Westminster, and was welcomed by a slender young man who occupied rooms on the first floor.

He made tea and we were slow at warming up to a conversation, because we were both rather diffident and we had never met before. The slender young man was E. V., and he had written to me to call and discuss a joint venture. He had written a fairy story and he wanted to know if I would illustrate it as a speculation. If I agreed we would besiege the publishers and share the plunder. I agreed, and a month later we opened fire; but the publishers would have none of it and we retired in good order.

As E. V. was then on some regular work this failure did not trouble him as much as it disappointed me.

It was about this time he told me that when his income dropped below three pounds a week he became alarmed and felt something must be done about it.

It made me think of one of DUMAS' characters, who says quite calmly, "Of course one has always fifty thousand francs."

It seemed to me that three pounds a week was almost wealth.

Even in those early days he showed great promise in the fine art of hospitality which he developed later with such happy results for his friends. At the time I was making the illustrations for the fairy story

he invited me to a cottage he had taken on the borders of Kent.

I arrived after dark at Westerham on a chilly November evening and he met me at the station. We had a two-mile walk which finished with a scramble downhill through a wood in utter darkness, feeling our way perilously from tree to tree.

At last we saw a light away below. It was a candle in the back-window of his cottage, put there to guide us.

I can never forget the sense of absolute comfort which came over me when we went out of the cold misty night into a great warm brick-floored kitchen with a wide fireplace piled up with blazing logs, a table laid all ready for a meal, illuminated with candles, and a regiment of bottles drawn up in military formation on the floor.

E. V. knew how to lead up to a climax.

For a few years after the episode of the unwanted fairy story E. V. and I did occasional collaborations for *The Idler* and other magazines. It is a commonplace to say that every man has a number of sides to his character, but I fancy E. V. had more than his share, or perhaps he developed more of them than most people do. In conversation his voice was pleasantly musical, though he could not sing, and he chose his words deliberately. Naturally he was sensitive to the sound of words and could never resist a pun. No one ever made such damaging personal remarks to his friends with

such an utter absence of malice and so little fear of rousing resentment. Something of a sentimentalist, a lover of art, fond of the things that make life pleasant and easy, he was nevertheless an amazingly prolific writer and enjoyed his work.

When I assisted him and "C. L. G." in concocting those little bitter satirical books, *Hustled History*, *If*, *Quoth the Raven* and some others, we used to meet, generally at week-ends, to compare notes, once in an hotel at Brighton, another time at Fittleworth, and occasionally in Kingston near Lewes or in a London flat.

At these times E. V. did his full share of the work, though he never seemed to be doing anything but playing about with the subject in hand.

Like all good essayists he had a gift for using his personal experiences and could find material for an article in the most unpromising places.

To have a reputation for wit is a dangerous thing for most men. I doubt if E. V. desired to have the reputation, but he certainly did not have to exert himself in order to say witty things. They just seemed to happen. Above all he had a warm appreciation of the wit of others.

There must be many like myself who will remember with gratitude his kindly help and encouragement. It will be a long time before I can become reconciled to the fact that I shall never again return his greeting across the Table. G. M.

Letters to Officialdom

XIX.—Re Dog

To the Chief Constable, The County Constabulary, Rumborough.

DEAR SIR,—Though I am an ardent animal-lover I fear I must lodge a complaint against Mr. Winch, of Upper Farm, Lowerdown, and his dog. This dog, which Mr. Winch permits to roam the countryside at large, has attacked me three times in the privacy of my own garden, bitten me once in

the basement (my *own* basement), and only this morning it terrified my wife by barking at her from the road. (It is a sheep-dog.) Luckily my wife was indoors at the time and instantly closed the window, but as you will appreciate—particularly if you are a married man—this has brought the matter to a head.

I should like you therefore to see Mr. Winch and order him to expel the dog permanently from the neighbourhood. You can do this, you know, without my first taking the thing into court. I happen to have some legal knowledge

of these matters and am not speaking without the book. Possibly you are acquainted with the book to which I am referring. It is called *How To Do Without a Solicitor*, and is a much treasured possession of ours, as all unsold copies were withdrawn shortly after publication, owing, I believe, to a lawsuit over certain of the contents.

At all events, under the heading of "Dogs, Livestock and Insects," it opens with a reference to country solicitors and their habits, and then makes the definite statement that "the owner of an animal is, in general,

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"WILL HE EAT WHAT WE EAT?"

liable, if aware of its propensities, for the mischief, if mischief it be and not common or garden misfeasance (*v. Posts on Public Footpaths*), done by it in any and under all circumstance and circumstances, without prejudice, thirteen being reckoned as twelve."

That seems perfectly clear to me and a compelling retort for you to use against any arguments of Mr. Winch's. It means that now I've been bitten by Mr. Winch's dog after warning Mr. Winch that his dog might bite me, he is liable—although to show there's no prejudice I should be willing to reckon thirteen bites (should I receive as many) as only twelve.

The only doubt raised in my mind regarding this point is that if thirteen are reckoned as twelve, an unscrupulous lawyer might reckon my one bite as *nil* and so prove that the bite was not *de facto* but *de jure*, which would be grossly unfair. You have only to look at the seat of my pants to judge how unfair it would be—and when I say pants I mean pants, not trousers. And if Mr. Winch suspects me of falsifying I shall be pleased to produce them

within seven days as an *a posteriori* argument in evidence against him, but not if the case be *sub judice*. (You see? He can't catch me out. It's all here in the book.)

I therefore resolve my complaint thus. Mr. Winch's dog is a menace, not only to my wife and myself (in that my wife is liable to be barked at if she looks out of a window, while I may be savaged when quietly watering my flowers: I *never* water them noisily or otherwise provoke the animal), but a menace also to our household, who was scrubbing the porch last week when the animal leaped over the front-gate and drank the water out of her bucket. Hitting out courageously with a mop our household smashed the hall window. When the glazier came to mend it he fell into the well of the basement and broke a Spode milk-jug, so I am asking Mr. Winch—and this seems to me no more than reasonable—to supply me gratis with the amount of milk spilt (1 qt.).

After all, there is no doubt whatever that the dog which drank the water out of the bucket was Mr. Winch's dog.

He was seen *in flagrante delicto*, which my book says is excellent evidence. Moreover, as I pointed out to Mr. Winch, while the glazier fell by reason of his own carelessness he obviously could not *in falling* control his direction. Responsibility for the spilt milk must therefore be shared by the ultimate cause of the man's presence in that place, *videlicet* or *id est* the dog yclept Buster. Mr. Winch cannot argue his way out of this. He may try to argue contributory negligence on the part of our household by saying that the water attracted the dog, but the retort simple to this is that the water, being dirty, was not put there designedly to tempt the animal. I cannot produce the water as evidence because the dog drank it all, but our household will testify to its condition on oath and even in writing, if necessary.

Thanking you in anticipation of your assistance,

Yours faithfully,
CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—Don't forget to emphasise that the dog was seen *in flagrante defacto*.



R. I. P.

I've decided at last that my pipe's a bit disgusting;
It bubbles and wheezes; the stem's as good as through;
The bowl's contracted to pin-point size with crusting,
And a fill only smokes at the most for a minute or two.

The trouble with pipes is they burn my tongue like the
dickens

The first score times I smoke them, or turn me green . . .
And then they break, or it needs an acre of chickens
To supply the feathers I use to keep them clean.

Like cheeses up to a point, they're better the nearer
They come to final and utter revoltingness;
Like brandies they have a way of becoming dearer
The older they get—if you keep them with success.

And that's a trouble as well, along with breaking—
There's nothing so easily lost as a favourite pipe.
One becomes hubristic about its mellow caking
And Nemesis grabs the thing when it's just on ripe.

You put it on top of the car when she's in the garage,
And it may be *anywhere* next between Leicester and
Leeds;

You take it out fishing to give the gnats a barrage—
And you leave it, for ever unfindable, in the reeds.

You leave them in shops, you leave them on bicycle pillion,
You leave them in bathrooms, in buses, in restaurant-cars;
You leave them on stiles, you leave them in cricket pavilions,
You leave them on week-end visits, you leave them in
bars.

* * * * *

But this is a pipe that survived those twenty horrid
Smokings, that hadn't been broken irreparably;
It's a pipe that got past the stage of the burning forehead
And parching tongue, and, treasured, remained with me.

But the end has come. For the maid, I see, when dusting
Handles it with averted nose and eye.

I've decided at last that the thing's a bit disgusting,
Which is what my wife's been saying since last July.

A Small Leak

"Takiteezi," the house next-door, is one of the Tudor Style Homes. Where it says "RING" there is a kind of iron-work sword-handle. Where it says "KNOCK" there is a brass figure called "Chaucer."

I knocked on this Chaucer and got no answer twice, so I pulled on the sword-handle. The thing came out a long way as though nothing were fastened to it but a rusty iron bar. Then it wouldn't go back until quite suddenly it went back altogether and made a large blood blister.

Mr. Burdle's head appeared at one of the upstairs casements.

"Good evening," I said.

"And bon-soir to you," said Mr. Burdle. He kept on looking without his glasses.

"I'm from 'San Faryan,'" I said.

"What about it?" said Mr. Burdle.

"Well, I'm up against it over our water-supply," I said.

"You're not the only one," said Mr. Burdle. "There's a lot of that about lately. Take my advice and don't monkey with it."

"But I want a bath," I said.

"Ah!" said Mr. Burdle. "Bath bunged up, eh? They're very hot on that round here. You'll have to tip off the sanitary inspector."

"But that's not it," I said. "The bath's not exactly stopped up. It's what—"

"Makes no difference," said Mr. Burdle. "They'll make a case of it whether it's bunged up exactly or not."

"But what I mean is it's not bunged at all. It's leaking."

"That's done it," said Mr. Burdle. "Once that water gets in your joists, once a matter of time before the floors

collapse. You don't happen to have any size?"

"No."

"Pity. Covering the floor with sized newspapers might have saved you."

The trouble with Mr. Burdle is he thinks so quickly he's apt to get hold of the wrong end of the stick.

"You've got hold of the wrong end of the stick, Mr. Burdle," I said. "It's my tap. I'm talking about."

"Your tap?"

"My cold tap. That's what's leaking."

"Phew!" said Mr. Burdle. "I wish you'd mentioned that first. If your cistern level's not up to scratch there'll be the devil to pay."

"That's why I thought I'd come and see you," I said.

"And here's me with a pint of fish-glue just on the boil," complained Mr. Burdle.

"If it's a question of spoiling anything—" I said.

"Make or moil," said Mr. Burdle. "I don't like to say 'No' in time of trouble."

You can't help liking Mr. Burdle. You could smell the glue as he opened the door. Young Ernie Burdle came out after with a straw tool-bag.

The bathroom tap was going quite as bad as before, even though it was supposed to be turned off.

"That's the one," I said.

Mr. Burdle just took one look at it.

"Can you beat that?" he said. "A non-standard downflow metric seamless."

"Aren't they any good?" I said.

"Nothing but a menace," said Mr. Burdle. "Condemned by the Water Board years ago. Lucky they haven't been down on you."

"I wish I'd known," I said. "They were in the house when I bought it."

"Yes," said Mr. Burdle. "I had to re-tap my place from top to bottom to get rid of them. Ernie! Look me out the claw-headed pipe-grips."

Young Ernie held up a rusty piece of iron with a curl on the end of it.

"What's this?" demanded Mr. Burdle.

"I can't help it," said Ernie. "If you want to know, the other bit's missing."

"That's what comes of lending your tools to people," said Mr. Burdle crossly. "Somebody's pinched half those grips and banked on me not noticing it."

It was an unlucky start. What was left of the grips was no more use than a scissors leg.

"What a thing to do!" I said.

"If you lent 'em an onion they'd pinch the skin off it," said Mr. Burdle. "There's no good crying over it. We shall have to feel our way with the V-jawed screw-hammer."

There was nothing wrong with the V-jawed screw-hammer, but getting hold of the tap with it was another matter. Whatever you did with one end of it the handle got stuck at the other, but somehow Mr. Burdle managed to get a position.

"Now!" he said. "When I shout you drop that cloth over it."

Then Mr. Burdle started to pull. He pulled until you could see his glasses steaming. Then he pulled again. Being a non-standard seamless must have had something to do with it, for at the end he was back where he'd started.

He pushed back his hat and glared at Ernie.

"And nobody told me it was a left-hand thread," he said.

"I have a small pair of pliers," I said.

"Pliers?" said Mr. Burdle. "This isn't a case of pliers. It's a case of





"'ULLO—LOOKS LIKE AS IF BERT'S SHOOK OFF 'IS LUMBAGO!"

turning things how they're meant to be turned."

He braced his boot in the bath and started the other way round.

"Look out!" shouted Ernie. "It's going!"

"Going? Of course it's going," said Mr. Burdle. "Here, Mister, get your leg in the bath and keep in time with me."

Getting in the bath with a stout man like Mr. Burdle wasn't easy, let alone getting hold of the screw-hammer, and impatience made things worse, but at last we both had a purchase.

"Now," said Mr. Burdle, "take the strain. Steady! One—er. Heave! Two—er. Once more—Three—er!"

We toppled against the wall, the tap and the V-jawed screw-hammer fell into the bath, and a solid jet of water rushed out of the round hole we'd made.

"Got it!" I said.

Mr. Burdle finished wringing out his trousers.

"You pulled very uneven," he said.

"I did?"

"You did. But I'm not blaming you for it. Only to be expected. Ernie! Pack up the tools."

"Pack up?" I said. "Can't we do the job here?"

"You can't do that job nowhere," said Mr. Burdle. "Look at that pipe." The pipe seemed to be jagged where the tap used to be.

"It looks a bit rough round the edges," I said.

"Rough round the edges and rotten to the core," said Mr. Burdle. "See that? Pure rottenness. And not two feet from a party-wall. What would the turnkey say?"

"The turnkey?" I said.

"You may be for it," said Mr. Burdle, and led the way down.

"But, Mr. Burdle," I said at the door, "don't leave me with all that water. Stop it, if it's only somehow."

"Stop it?" said Mr. Burdle in surprise. "Turn off the main? Why, that's more than I dare do. You'll have to get hold of the turnkey."

"But what's he going to say?" I said.

Mr. Burdle shook his head. "That's one thing I *can't* help you with," he said.

Floral Fancy

WHEN Cousin Florence's dear old friend Miss Littlemug came to settle in Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green we were earnestly begged by Cousin Florence on a postcard to do *anything* we could.

"Do help about the garden," wrote Cousin Florence. "She knows *nothing*, but is so anxious to learn."

In this, to be frank, Miss Littlemug and I bear a certain resemblance to one another—except that I am not anxious to learn.

Obviously it would be Charles who would have to help her about the garden, and I told him so.

"Couldn't she be given a walking-stick?" said Charles. "Or even a bath-chair?"

I explained what I—or rather Cousin Florence—meant.

"Old Miss Littlemug has always lived in London, but now she's going to live in the country, and she wants a garden. You can tell her all about mulching and pruning and grafting and bedding-out."

"Can't she afford a gardener?"

"Yes, but she wants to do some of it herself."

"Then why ask me?" said Charles. "Naturally she doesn't want to be entirely at the gardener's mercy. She'll want to tell him what to put in and so on, and how can she if she doesn't know?"

I was, as one so often is, both right and wrong.

Miss Littlemug, it turned out, wanted to tell the gardener what to

keep out of the garden rather than what to put into it.

She was a woman of passionate prejudices.

One followed Miss Littlemug perfectly so long as she kept to the simpler paths of horticulture.

"No scarlet geraniums."

No. No scarlet geraniums.

"Nor those yellow things."

"Dandelions?"

"No, no. Cal—something."

"Calceolarias. No calceolarias."

"But roses and lilies and pansies and sweet-peas and things."

Of course.

But at this point old Miss Littlemug had to all intents and purposes shot her bolt.

There were several other things that she wanted put *into* the garden, and hundreds that she wanted kept out—and she seemed not to know the names of any of them.

Nor were her descriptive efforts always wholly successful, although we did identify lobelias, nasturtiums and the common rhododendron.

We then met our Waterloo.

"There is one thing that gardeners love and that I can't bear. I will *not* have it in any garden of mine."

There was only one garden of Miss Littlemug's, and that was a very small one, but we forbore to say so.

"You know the flowers I mean."

"Of course," said Charles. Not, I think, altogether candidly.

"It's always there."

"All the year round?" asked Laura, looking astonished.

"I mean gardeners always put it into all flower-beds, unless they're stopped."

"Begonias."

"Cinerarias."

"Stocks."

Miss Littlemug repudiated them all.

"Is it a perennial or an annual?"

Charles inquired—and I could have told him beforehand that this was a wholly useless question.

"But," said Miss Littlemug, "it's a flower you all know. You see it everywhere. It's well-known."

"Not by us," one had to tell her.

"I tell you what," said Laura excitedly, "we can guess it, like a game. Just asking questions. What colour is this flower?"

"If it's a game I can only answer 'Yes' or 'No,' surely?" archly returned Miss Littlemug, entering into the spirit of the thing almost too thoroughly.

She then replied "Yes" successively to every colour we mentioned except green, about which she was doubtful.

"Then it can't be sweet-peas or tulips, because they've got them in green now," Laura said.



"'OW'S THAT FOR LOBELIA?"

"You *all* know the flower I mean," cried old Miss Littlemug, evidently not far off a breakdown.

I saw that the thing had got to stop.

"You say that this flower can be red or yellow or blue or white or orange or pink or purple or crimson?"

"I think so."

"You don't mean roses, do you?" asked Charles.

"There are no blue roses," screamed Laura and I in a breath poetically.

"There are very few blue flowers at all. Unless you mean lupins."

Miss Littlemug didn't mean lupins.

Or delphiniums.

Or even forget-me-nots or hyacinths.

Nor saxifrage.

"Are they large or small?"

"They can be almost any size, I think. I've seen enormous ones at flower-shows."

"Chrysanthemums," said Laura madly.

"Honestly," said Charles kindly, "I think you've got your facts wrong somewhere."

"Can't you tell us anything more about them that might be a help?" I asked.

Miss Littlemug went into a coma.

When she came out of it she said timidly: "They always—and it's one reason why I don't much like them—remind one that autumn is coming."

And Charles and Laura and I all said at once: "Dahlias."

"Only why," one asked later, "did you say that they were sometimes blue?"

"I thought they might be," said Miss Littlemug. "I told you I knew nothing about gardening."

E. M. D.

More Recitals of the Week

MR. AMADEUS HOOPADOOP

It was a varied and unusual programme that this famous baritone chose for his recital at the Mugwump Hall on Tuesday. But why, one may ask, should a singer of *lieder*, *chansons*, songs and *canti* choose to appear on the platform clad in a blindingly red coat? Mr. Hoopadoop is admittedly well known for his hunting songs, and his third offering, "Ho! the Jolly Fox" (*Skunk*), went well enough with his attire; as did also his fifth, "The Lusty Fox, Ho!" (*Bunck*). A certain coarse resonance of tone is not out of place in the "Ho!" which is so noticeable a feature of songs of this type, and the resonance of Mr. Hoopadoop's "Ho!"—it is always the same one—is as coarse as its coarseness is resonant. The red coat was not ill-suited either to a drinking song in the second half of the programme, "Ho! Ho! Ho!" (*Klink*). But for most of the *lieder*, particularly "Ho! mein Herz!" (*Wunck*); the *chansons*, notably "Mon amour, ohé!" (*Bonck*); the songs, including "Beloved, ho!" (*Smith*); and the *canti*, especially "Hoho! cara, hoho!" (*Plunketto*)—for these Mr. Hoopadoop would have done well to doff his red coat altogether. He might have stuffed it into the piano, which would have sounded much better if he had.

THE DRETFULL QUINTET

This combination of players is interesting chiefly because of the fact that it is really an orthodox string quartet with batlet obbligato. The batlet, which is the invention of M. Oom, who plays it here, consists of one piano-wire strung

on a rather large table-tennis racket and plucked, the notes being varied not by the unaided finger but by the rolling up and down the wire of a small glass knife-rest. This produces a tone pleasing or intolerable, according to whether the hearer likes or dislikes the batlet.

One doubts whether its presence improves BACH's *Air for G String* (arr.—none too well—Dretfull) with which the quintet misguidedly opened their recital at the Glumbauer Hall on Monday night. One also doubts whether it is anything but a calamity when introduced into the *Tannhauser* Overture (arr. Dretfull), with which they no less misguidedly concluded. But one may say with certainty that no other instrument could possibly have produced the sounds introduced by M. Oom's batlet into BEETHOVEN's *Pianoforte Sonata, Op. 111* (arr. Dretfull), which came at a memorable point in between. Mr. J. Smith was best man, unless this information has strayed in from another column.

Mlle. BEATRICE STOOGEE

Mlle. Beatrice Stooage, a young pianist making her first appearance in this country, devoted the early part of a very long programme on Monday at Headlong Hall to works that were unfamiliar when she began and considerably more so when she ended. To the rhythmic eccentricities of the composition usually known as Startingquick's F Sergeant-Major Sonata she applied treatment at least equally eccentric, the result being to give that dubiously-constructed work a quite unmerited, though happily only temporary, significance. A deceptively colourless rendering of what sounded like a simple tune by Clove misled many of the audience, who failed to realise that the player's skill in getting off the beat had led her to drop squarely on to it again in the next bar.

It may be questioned whether syncopation could go further, and it may be answered that it could. Professor Snootlegrab has shown this very clearly in his monograph *Right Off the Beat*, in which he describes a performance of the chorus of a jazz tune which consisted of dead silence for thirty-two bars (the time such a chorus would normally take to play). "The player keeps right off every beat until the tune is over," the Professor explains, "and naturally has no need to make a sound afterwards. This is the most highly syncopated and restful form of jazz extant."

All this is no reflection on, and indeed has no connection with, Mlle. Beatrice Stooage.

MME. ARIA

Herr Otho Galumphborg, the accompanist at Mme. Aria's operatic recital at the Lounge Hall on Thursday, somewhat confused the proceedings by rising to make a speech between each item. Thus, after Mme. Aria had given her impassioned rendering of *Ah! do re mi*, Herr Galumphborg advanced to the front of the platform and gave his own just as impassioned rendering of Germany's plea for colonies. Those members of the audience who tried to find some connection between this and the aria (which, it will be remembered, is sung by the dying Elsa in disguise to her disguised lover, who is unaware either that she is Elsa or that she is dying, while her aged father, in disguise, is fighting a duel with the usurping Duke on the battlements above) failed. Herr Galumphborg's subject after Mme. Aria's exacting solo, *Fa, sol la—Ah! no*, proved to be the supposed unfairness to Herr HITLER of the British Press. This rather spoiled the effect of tension created by the song, which in the opera comes immediately before the discovery of the missing jewels in the perfidious Oilio's beard by the disguised Hans, after Anna's escape from the Burgomaster's nunnery.

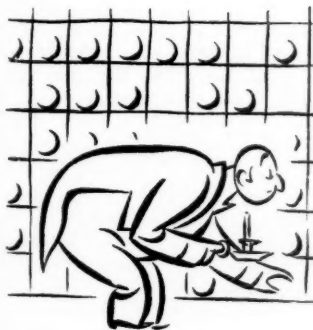
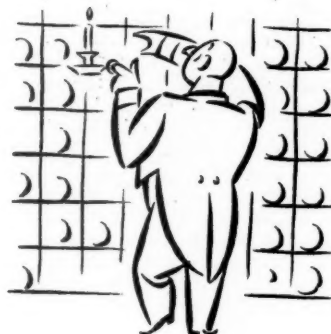
Altogether a rattling bad show.

R. M.



"TWO LADIES AND TWO GENTS, PLEASE."

DOUGLAS.



The Nevo's Knock

WE must all take off our hats (or pads) to the cricket scribes—all, at least, who are members of the literary craft. For it is our common aim to make people interested in things which do not greatly interest them, and so to persuade them to read what is written.

The cricket, indeed the sporting scribes in general, have mastered the problem. They have the public mind, as they would say, "taped." We eat out of their hands. They can now make ten successive maiden overs exciting.

And maybe those whose task it is to interest the public in even duller things, such as democracy and politics, should study their methods and imitate them.

I should like, for example, to see a few Parliamentary reports done by the famous racing and golf experts of *The Times*. You know the ceremonious and moving manner in which the account of one of the "classic" races begins:—

"Lord Lavender's Pease-Blossom, by Moth out of Sweet-Pea, trained by George Withers and ridden by F. Bugg, won the Five Thousand Guineas at Ratchet to-day. Mrs. Fawcett's Nasturtium was second by a head; and the French horse, Mélasse, ran third. The winner will now go to stud, and many were the sad hearts as this good horse was led in for the last time. I do not remember a more generous and well-mannered animal. Lobelia, whom I took to win, was last. But I do not care. The day was fine, with soft fleecy clouds which made racing a pleasure. The success of that fine sportsman, Lord Lavender, now in his ninety-fifth year, was moving. Many bookmakers shed tears at the beauty of the winner. Even the going was soft . . ."

And so on. Here, we feel, at once, not only that something important has happened but that the writer thoroughly enjoyed being there. And we wish that we had been present too.

But how rarely do we get the same impression from the report of a Parliamentary "classic"! The Budget, for example—a Budget involving the collection and expenditure of nearly £1,000,000,000 in a single year!

What do we read then?

"A dull Budget' was the general verdict . . ." Dull! My hat! £1,000,000,000!

The awful truth is that Budget speeches can be pretty dull, that few

people really enjoy being there, and, I imagine, no Parliamentary reporters. They have the graphic touch and use it well when there is anything to be graphic about: but, unlike the cricket fellows, they do not feel impelled to make many bricks without straw.

Perhaps the record system would help them. It is truly wonderful that after so many years of cricket in which so many surprising things have happened there should still remain so many new and surprising things to be done. Still more wonderful—a kindly Fate has ordained, it seems, that so many of these surprising things should happen in a match of which the really surprising feature is that nothing much does happen in the end.

Well, a Test Match is very like a "big" debate in Parliament, especially a big debate on Foreign Affairs. The great men go in and score lengthy centuries; the rabbits sit in the pavilion with their pads on and dutifully applaud. Then the rabbits go in and are soon bowled; and by that time nobody cares very much whether they are bowled or not. The sooner they are bowled the better, for the great men must have a second knock. And in the end nothing much happens.

But at least there might be "records." Indeed—but unrecorded—there are. Mr. GLADSTONE, in opening his first Budget (which concerned the trifling sum of £80,000,000), spoke for four-and-three-quarter hours. That was a

record. Sir JOHN SIMON, opening his first Budget (concerning £944,000,000), spoke for one hour thirty-nine minutes only. That was a record too. But I saw no news-bill announcing "JACK'S BUDGET—RECORD HUMBLER." Why not? It was a good record. He could have made his exposition much more exciting, but no doubt he preferred to be brief.

There was another fine record during Question-Time on June 23rd. There are now two clocks in the Chamber, one opposite the SPEAKER, one over his head. Something went wrong with one (or both?) that afternoon, and during some high words about bombing Mr. WILLIAM MABANE rose and said, "On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, which clock is right?"

A most important question. The fate of immense measures and causes might depend on the answer, for a Member might wait to "put the question" till it was 11 P.M. by the later clock and meanwhile the SPEAKER might adjourn the House by the earlier.

Moreover, it was a record! Such a point of order had never been raised in the whole history of Parliament. But I saw no headlines.

Then there are Christian names. It has been a moving thing to watch the quick advance of Mr. HAMMOND in the affections of the scribes. It seems only yesterday that he was "WALTER HAMMOND." Then he became "WALTER." And now (with three more Tests to go) he is "WALLY." Yes, I saw somewhere the other day the large alarming headlines—

"WALLY'S
MOTHER
QUAILS."

These, I found, referred to the natural nervousness felt by Mr. HAMMOND's mother as he approached his hundred runs.

How much more exciting would the Second Reading of the Bees (Regulation) Bill be if the Press Gallery could find out what the statesmen's wives or sisters were thinking about it all! Look—

"WOMAN WEEPS ALONE
AS UNDER-SECRETARY
EXPLAINS CLAUSE 50."

I think the best thing would be to put that gifted and amusing writer, Mr. C. B. FRY, on to the job; and when the Test Matches are finished (if any of them are) I hope that *The Evening Standard* will send him to the Press Gallery. He does not bother about the records, but he would flash



"Now, JULIAN, SAY HOW D'YOU DO NICELY TO MR. BUNCLE!"



THE PICNICKERS

a bonny pencil among the Christian names. Thus (with apologies):—

"Question-time—and not much doing. No sting in the assault. The Ministers keep their sweaters on. ERNIE BROWN plays back bluffly. Ball to the bowler and no harm done. Our ERNIE could stand a week of this stuff. The *shorter* catechism.

Now War, and it is BELISHA's knock. A smooth fellow this. More forward work here. That left elbow prominent and half a smile for cover-point. Our HORBY has the measure of the field—and lets them know it.

Ha, ha! A wicked supplementary from tall DALTON. Our HUGH looks daggers and talks torpedoes. But the BELISHA has cracked him to the Press Gallery with a laugh. Good lad. And so the Beacon boy carries his bat.

Now the PRIME takes guard—and the field takes notice. Smooth too, this

NEVILLE, but with a difference. The other was polished oak—this is steel. Less decorative. But dour (the Latin *durus*, we hazard). Yes, hard as nails is the NEVO.

Here is an old-timer with a bandaged bat. But it drives. A captain's confidence. Listen. That is the boy SANDYS on his way to the boundary. After him goes the GALLACHER. Still protesting is the GALLO. He would fain fling the ball back. But Mr. SPEAKER negatives. A sound No-man is our ALGERNON.

And now what have we? Ho, ho! it is the little MANDER; and the Spanish Inquisition begins again. Laugh at him if you will, but our GEOFF does not take No for an answer. He accepts a wallop in the midriff from the PRIME, but here he is, edging back to the crease. Biff again? No. Now he has the NEVO poking somewhat and on the wrong foot. A touch of waspery too.

Well, a captain is a man of cares.

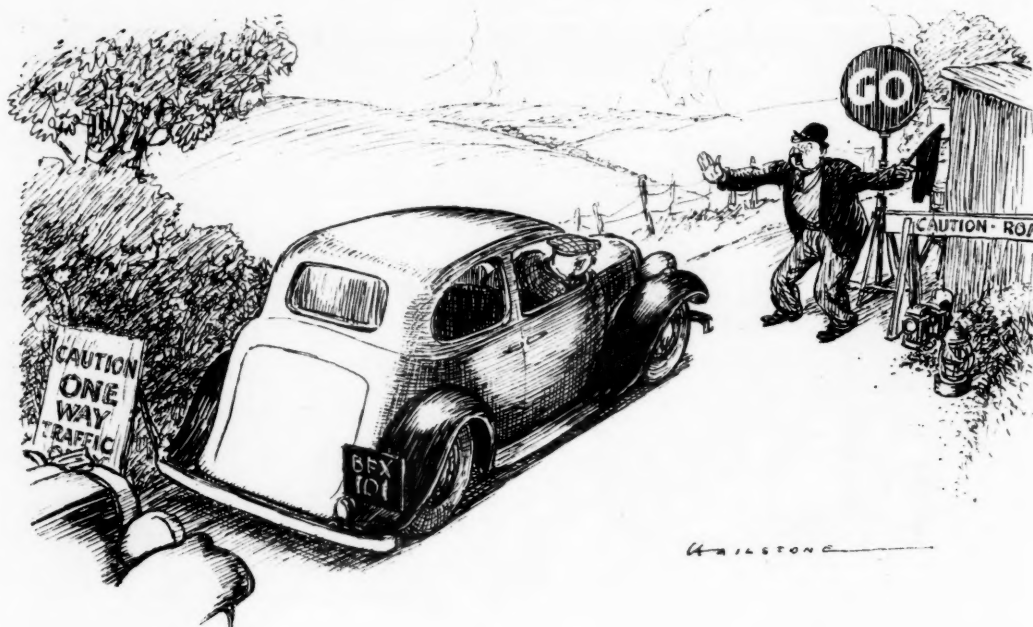
And he has more to think of than the DEMANDER's dollypops. Here is a fast one from the ATTLEE. Now NOEL BAKER sends down a googlie. Our HUGH slings in a bumper. Comrade CLEM is climbing over the Table. Now the ANEURIN lends voice. Tories yell. Not Questions but Detonations.

Brisk work. But the PRIME keeps his bails intact. The score-board gives no cause for boasting; but our NEV is not out yet. Nor will be." A. P. H.

"It appears clearly established now—and not denied by the Prime Minister, in spite of opportunities offered—that at a luncheon given by Lady Astor on May 10 to about 14 American and Canadian journalists, the Prime Minister granted an interview in which he made a number of exceedingly important statements on British foreign policy, put much more sharply and bluntly than has ever been done in this country."

Local Paper.

It is felt in some quarters that the PRIME MINISTER ought not to be sharp and blunt simultaneously.



"WHAT'S THE MATTER—IT SAYS 'GO'?"

"YES, I KNOW IT DO—THAT'S ONLY BECAUSE I AIN'T TURNED IT ROUND YET."

Reflections of an American Living in England (For Americans only)

(With apologies to Mr. Ogden Nash)

ABOUT England, the British Isles, or any other name for Great Britain

A great many things have been written.

About history and cathedrals and countrysides and Stratford-on-Avon,

And whether the stones in the courtyard of this simply darling old inn are restored or whether it is the original pavin'.

But those were written by tourists and pleasure-parties and otherwise exhilarated trippers

Who didn't care whether for breakfast they had poached eggs or boiled eggs or no eggs but instead a plate of fried kippers.

And when for some months you have been making England your habitation

And consider doing it for several months more, no matter what the loss in income-tax and grocery bills and other benefits to your own nation,

Why, then you feel that you must write or speak or in some similar fashion utter

About things like cold-storage bathrooms, self-ventilating toast-racks, and waitresses that never bring you any butter.

(Not that I view any of these quaint little customs with rancour,

Because I know that they are as unchangeable and immovable as a fourteen-ton ship with a fifteen-ton anchor.)

But before I have become fully a fit candidate for a seat at the table next the Mad Hatter

I really must unburden myself on the subject of batter.

If you have ever tasted what the English poetically describe as "currant-roll"

You will know that after eating it you feel as if you had the fused and amalgamated weight of twenty flat-irons on your soul;

And if you are tempted by such enticing names as Treacle Sponge or Jam Flan or Gooseberry Fool or Cold Shape,

Heed a word of warning now that may help you eventually to escape;

Because when a dyed-in-the-wool Britisher is turned loose with a spoon and a mixing-bowl and a flour-sifter

He can't any more tell the difference between enough and too much than an old toper can tell the difference between half-a-bottleful and a snifter,

And the result is something that he bakes or fries or sometimes boils tied up in a cloth with some raisins and a currant or two,

And serves up with a sauce that tastes like he had tried to make half-a-dozen recipes at once and burred a few.

So if you want thoroughly to enjoy the things that continue to fill me with gratitude—

Like clean subway trains, and buses that arrive somewhere, and big bath-towels, and a climate that really isn't so bad when you consider the latitude—

Take the word of a fellow-countryman whose reminiscences can grow bitter:

It is safer to bite HITLER than to bite an English fritter.



THE DEFENCES OF LONDON

"Magog, what of the night?"

July

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, June 27th.—Lords: Limitation Bill given Second Reading.

Commons: Statements about Mr. Sandys' Case. Finance Bill taken in Committee.



Master LESLIE HORE-BELISHA. "DASH IT! WE CAN'T HAVE CATS LET OUT OF BAGS IN THIS DEPARTMENT!"

Tuesday, June 28th.—Lords: Coal Bill passed.

Commons: Finance Bill taken in Committee.

Wednesday, June 29th.—Lords: Road Haulage Wages (No. 2) Bill passed through Committee.

Commons: More statements about Mr. Sandys' Case. Bacon Bill considered on Report.

Thursday, June 30th.—Commons: Debate on Mr. Sandys' Case.

Monday, June 27th.—Spain once more dominated Questions. In reply to Mr. CARY's suggestion that the Government might help British shipping companies trading in Spanish waters to mount anti-aircraft guns, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN objected that among many difficulties in the way the chief was that of the structural alterations which would be necessary.

Sir HENRY PAGE CROFT, who regards General FRANCO as a kind of modern ARTHUR (whose Excalibur of alien pirate bombers he seems prepared to swallow—an old circus trick) raised a minor storm when he asserted that at Castellon a premature relief had been staged by the Republican authorities, who, when the population welcomed their troops, thinking they were Nationalists, opened fire, killing two

thousand. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR declared that to suggest that the troops of a friendly Power had organised a massacre of their subjects was surely an outrageous use of the Order Paper. So other Members thought, but the SPEAKER was afraid he could not go further than to ask Members to exercise care in framing their questions.

The House welcomed the AIR MINISTER's announcement that an expert industrial organiser, Mr. E. J. H. LEMON, of the L.M.S. Railway, was to become Director-General of Production at the Air Ministry and a Member of the Air Council; and it then passed on to the case of Mr. SANDYS, of which it is likely to hear much more in the near future.

In the course of a detailed explanation Mr. SANDYS, who said he was asking for the guidance of the SPEAKER in a matter to do with the Official Secrets Act and affecting the privileges of Members, told the House how, having drawn Mr. HORE-BELISHA's attention to the grave shortage of anti-aircraft guns and instruments, and supplied him with actual figures, he had been sent for by the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, who, asking for the sources of his information, told him that he was under a legal obligation to give them and added that refusal might involve imprisonment up to two years. In the end the ATTORNEY-GENERAL had admitted that "at present" there was no intention of proceeding against him, but Mr. SANDYS, as a Member, thought this was not quite good enough.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL, Sir DONALD SOMERVELL, then described how,



THE COAL HEAVER

(After "Cries of London," published in 1688.)

Lord STANHOPE moved the third reading of the Coal Bill.

since someone had clearly given away a highly important secret, Mr. HORE-BELISHA had asked him to see Mr. SANDYS and request his help in tracing the disclosure; but he insisted that his hesitation over the question of legal proceedings sprang not, as Mr. SANDYS seemed to think, from any previous consideration but from the fact that



A DUAL PERSONALITY

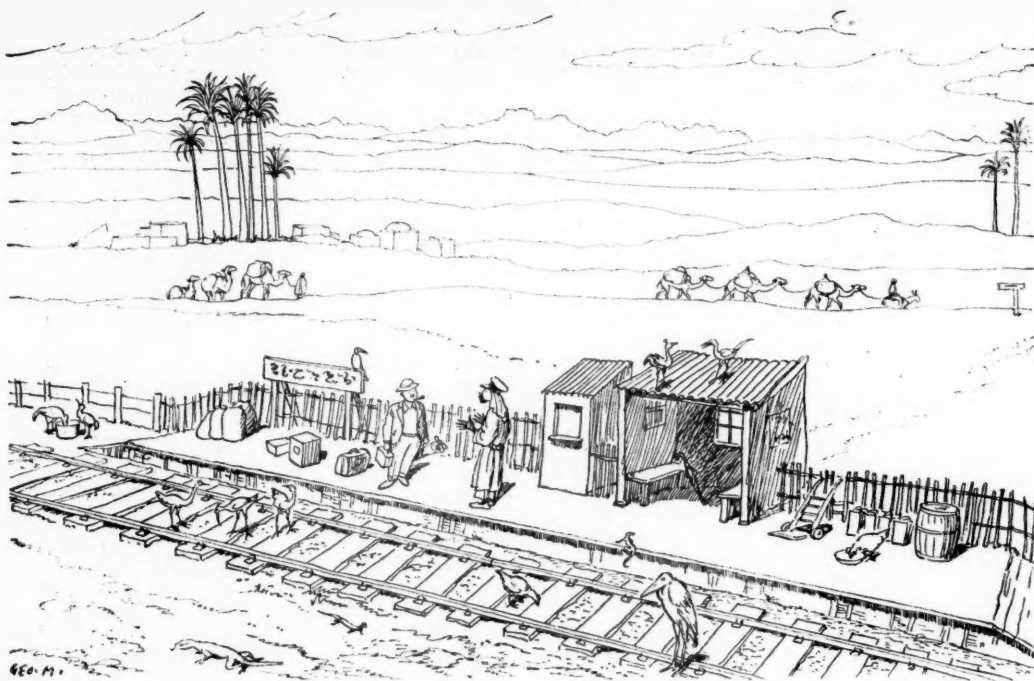
2nd-Lt. DUNCAN | SANDYS, Esq., M.P.

such a course had not in fact been contemplated.

The ruling of the SPEAKER was that an issue had been raised of importance to the House, and accordingly he advised Mr. SANDYS to give notice of a motion which could then be discussed; and after the P.M. had promised that the necessary time would be allowed, Mr. SANDYS did so, asking for the appointment of a Select Committee.

Tuesday, June 28th.—The Coal Bill was given a gloomy Third Reading by the Lords and tipped down the chute leading back to the Lower Cellar, which will have a good deal to say about the way the fruit of its wisdom has been gnawed. Lord HASTINGS, the Bill's principal opponent, took the opportunity of making some rather spiteful remarks about the Civil Service, for which Lord STANHOPE duly rebuked him.

During Questions Mr. HORE-BELISHA announced that anti-aircraft Territorial Forces were to be slightly more than doubled, that these would in future be organised in five divisions (instead of two), and that two Lieutenant-Generals would be responsible, one in command and one at the War Office; and the P.M. told Mr. ATTLEE that the



"No, Sir, the bar is closed during Ramadan."

Government proposed to set up a Select Committee to inquire into the SANDYS' case, the terms of reference of which would be those contained in Mr. SANDYS' own motion.

After Questions Captain RAMSAY was given leave to bring in a curious little Bill "to prevent the participation of aliens in assemblies for the purpose of propagating blasphemous or atheistic doctrines or in other activities calculated to interfere with the established religious institutions of Great Britain," in spite of Mr. HARVEY's eloquent opposition.

The House, returning to its old friend the Finance Bill, was not surprised when the CHANCELLOR rejected an optimistic Labour attempt to exempt Co-operative Societies from N.D.C.

Wednesday, June 29th.—There was an unexpected development in the SANDYS case after Questions to-day, when Mr. SANDYS again asked the SPEAKER's guidance, having been ordered as a Territorial officer to appear in uniform to-morrow before a military Court of Inquiry. He submitted that this was a gross breach of privilege, since his position as a Member was in process of being considered by the House, and the SPEAKER ruled that he

had indeed made out a *prima facie* case.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN immediately moved that the matter should be referred to the Committee of Privileges, and later in the discussion announced that Mr. HORE-BELISHA was at once asking the Army Council to suspend proceedings until the Committee had met and reported. In answer to Mr. ATTLEE, who was critical of the Government for allowing the Army Council to come into conflict in this way with the House, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN declared that the setting up of a Court of Inquiry in such a case was automatic.

Mr. CHURCHILL, who is Mr. SANDYS' father-in-law, supported Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's motion and asked that Mr. SANDYS should be protected from the summons. Mr. EDE gave the House the historical titbit that the leading case in the matter was that of Sir EDWIN SANDYS, a Member in 1621; Sir PERCY HARRIS insisted that the Executive must always be subordinate to the Commons, and Mr. HORE-BELISHA, replying to a number of questions, vigorously defended the action of the Army Council.

Pigs most of the evening.

Thursday, June 30th.—During Questions this afternoon Mr. CHAMBERLAIN

announced that the Committee on Privileges had reported that by the summons to Mr. SANDYS to appear before a military Court of Inquiry a breach of privilege had been committed, but that it recommended that no further action should be taken.

The debate on the case did not go very far, for, in moving that a Select Committee be set up, the P.M. advised Members not to try themselves to do the work of the Committee; but Mr. HORE-BELISHA told the House that the document from which the relevant facts had been extracted was the Emergency Plan of Defence of the Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief, a highly secret paper, and he admitted that the contradiction for which Mr. SANDYS had asked was impossible, because the facts were true. Mr. SANDYS, in a brief statement, declared that he knew nothing about this document. Mr. CHURCHILL, who calculated that he and the others of the deputation which had brought air information to Mr. BALDWIN had made themselves liable to something like eight-hundred years' imprisonment, attacked Mr. HORE-BELISHA for misleading statements about anti-aircraft guns. And the leaders of the Opposition spoke reasonably on free speech.

More Records

OUR records are perhaps unimportant as far as the world is concerned, for the activities of Upper Crowsfoot have never claimed the attention of the masses.

Yet this season has produced so many achievements both curious and splendid that it would be a pity if they were allowed to slip into oblivion.

Quite apart from Joe Potter being the first man to secure fifty runs in May, the performance of the Vicar easily deserves first notice. With his splendid innings of sixteen against the Lower Mumble team he can claim three distinct and important records which probably will remain unbroken for many a long year. Besides being the third Vicar in our village to be run out twice in a season he also achieves the distinction of shattering the long-standing highest score for a last batsman. Added to this is the fact that he is the first man to lose a ball in the far-side ditch. It is true that Jasper Skeet lost a ball there in '09, but it will be remembered that this was found by one of Colonel Trumble's dogs during the evening. Another curious point concerning this same match is that Herbert Thring of the Lower Mumble team was seen to be wearing a single pad on the wrong leg. There is some superstition that this is an omen of defeat for the side concerned, though I incline to believe that our win was decisive enough to be above superstition.

James Harrington is the only man who has knocked down his own wicket three times in successive matches, but this is probably due to the scythe-like action resulting from his everyday occupation.

Rather more interesting is the achievement of Ted Skimpole, who with a tremendous hit knocked over the telegraph-board. This is the second time this has been accomplished in Upper Crowsfoot, and on each occasion the performer has been a bell-ringer.

We are now looking forward to next Saturday's affray with Great Thistleton, and there is already much speculation as to whether the record peculiar to this match will remain standing. It was in the early part of the century that Tom Catchpole hit a full-toss into the duck-pond—a feat which is well remembered by reason of the fact that their fast bowler, attempting the catch, fell in and had to change his trousers before resuming. The only pair available happened to be very much too small for him, and his subsequent

bowling so lacked fire that we were able to win by a comfortable margin.

It was at Great Thistleton too that a postman ran for five with the ball lodged behind the top of one of his pads.

The Spade

OLD Wilky used this spade,
shovelling the muck;
and scraped it clean with his heel
when the clay stuck.

No wonder this spade,
when near water, itches;

it wants to have a go
at them gormed ditches.

Dad Wilkinson
dug with this spade;
he's dead and gone now
but its blade doesn't fade.

His grand-daughter's husband
digs with it still
to let the water
down the hill.

But he'll throw it away
when it's rusty and done;
And then will he think
of Gaffer Wilkinson?



"COME IN AN' LOOK, LADIES. I WILL NOT SQUEEZE YOU TO BUY."

At the Play

"GOLDEN BOY" (ST. JAMES'S)

THIS is one of the most instructive night-classes in the American language which I have attended for some time, and it is conducted by a very capable body of extension-lecturers. Those who go locally to the syndicated courses of the big Hollywood professors will find these instructors perfectly intelligible; and their demonstration is so graphic that even the uneducated will soon get the gist of what is happening.

The play is by a young author newly famous on the other side, Mr. CLIFFORD ODETS. It is in twelve short scenes, and deals with the brief but dramatic career in the boxing-ring of the son of a vegetable carter in the Italian sector of New York. Like most plays of its kind it suffers from some of the disadvantages of rapid impressionism, in that situations are hardly more than developed before the curtain comes down, and that interest is often cut off while still rising and so has to be worked up afresh; but it suffers much less than you would expect, for its author is clever at striking a dominant note of atmosphere very quickly, and he presents human essentials with admirable boldness and economy. If the play succeeds over here, and I think it will, it will be not because of anything notable in its story or even in its humour, for London audiences have turned down funnier expositions of American idiom, but because it offers an arresting glimpse of a side of life in New York which few English can know, and a refreshingly original slant on character.

The darling of his magnificent old peasant father, *Joe Bonaparte* has a talent for the violin and a megalomaniac notion that the world is against him and that therefore he must beat the world at its own game of being ruthless and rich and powerful. He lives, with acute discomfort, in his own mind, which is tied up in inextricable knots of egotism; he is a quiet boy, not a boaster, but he is eaten up with the conviction that nothing in exist-

ence can stand against him. Music is his only other love.

He sees money as his key, boxing as the way to forge it. Forcing himself on a seedy promoter, he is discovered to have a lethal and intelligent mitt.



PATERNAL FELICITUDE

Mr. Bonaparte . . . MR. MORRIS CARNOVSKY
Tom Moody . . . MR. ROMAN BOHNEN

In a series of minor fights he does well enough to justify a first-class affray in New York; but as the date for this approaches his backers realise that something is muting the full glory of his punch. To their astonishment, for

they are men of crude outlook, they find he is afraid of ruining his delicate grip of a bow.

Old *Mr. Bonaparte*, pathetically anxious that his son should stick to music, has put his savings into a splendid fiddle for *Joe's* twenty-first birthday, and begs him to forget about money. He nearly wins him back from the ring; but in the meantime *Joe* has fallen in love with his manager's girl, and a well-known gangster has joined his backers. So old *Mr. Bonaparte* loses and *Joe* wins. He kills his opponent. Afterwards, driving wildly through the night with the girl, his car crashes and they are both killed.

Although the scenes in the dressing-room are more exciting, those in the *Bonaparte* home are the best, for the burly, hot-tempered, generous old man is a fine creation, to whose relationship with his son Mr. ODETS has given a depth which makes it the real centre of the play. *Joe's* tragedy is to a greater degree *Mr. Bonaparte's*, and beside it the tragedy of the girl and of the elderly promoter whom she deserts are on a minor plane.

There is a cast of nineteen. The quiet insolence with which Mr. LUTHER ADLER plays the lead is very well-judged, and when *Joe's* confidence leaves him after the fight its collapse into bewilderment is as good. Although he has comparatively little to say, Mr. ADLER fully suggests the wildness of the resentment and ambition which drive the boy on. Mr. MORRIS CARNOVSKY's *Mr. Bonaparte* is worth more than a mere few lines of praise; clear and strong and immensely sincere, pathetic without a single false step into sentimentality, it is a splendid piece of acting. As *Lorna*, the tough girl with the golden heart, Miss LILLIAN EMERSON is excellent; Mr. ROMAN BOHNEN gives a sound sketch of the weak blustering promoter; there is no doubt at all that Mr. ELIA KAZAN's wealthy gunman has earned his eminence; and as *Joe's* garrulous brother-in-law Mr. WILL LEE does much for the humours of the play. ERIC.

"HOW DOMESTIC COURTS WORK."—*Daily Telegraph*.
Ours avoids it like the plague.



A STUDY IN TOUGH INFANCY

Lorna Moon . . . MISS LILLIAN EMERSON
Rozy Gottlieb . . . MR. ROBERT LEWIS
Eddie Fuseli . . . MR. ELIA KAZAN
Tom Moody . . . MR. ROMAN BOHNEN
Joe Bonaparte . . . MR. LUTHER ADLER

The Beauties of Bridge

III.—On Bidding

To bid correctly one may justly name
The very arch and keystone of the game.
Points of less moment you may safely miss;
You'll drive a taxi if you fail in this.
Bad play may cause some trifling loss to fall,
Whole fortunes vanish if you wrongly call,
Your Bridge appearing to your partner's eyes
A Bridge of Asses and a Bridge of Sighs.

News is the aim of every Contract bid,
To show more clearly what would else lie hid.
By bids our strength and weakness we impart,
And 'tis as much a language as an art.
"Darling, I've hearts," the opening caller cries;
"Try spades, my pet," th' alluring girl replies.
They thus piece clue with clue till all grows warm,
Learn as they hear and when they speak inform.
So, summer over, Father scans with care
The snaps he took at Weston-super-Mare.
Through the pink light his eye will soon remark
Faint dubious shapes where all at first was dark;
Child, wife and car loom slowly into sight;
On my left Uncle, Auntie on my right;
Till our relations, like some hideous crew
Of negro blackshirts, darken into view.

Wide is the gulf in Bridge that sunders still
The power to bid correctly from the will.
Knowledge for some would put their calling right;
Others, more wilful, bid against the light.
Such, versed in Contract, still miscall the hand
And flout the laws they fully understand—
Nay, more, expound those rules they set at naught,
Still teaching others, still themselves untaught.
So Smith, who knows by heart the Highway Code,
Will drive like Satan once he's on the road,
Mark amber lights turn red, then with a roar
Blind on and murder six pedestrians more.

Far from my table may that fiend be banned
Who for the honours overcalls the hand.
Honours should sway, not fix the wise man's choice;
Have casting votes but no deciding voice.
Sound is that law, though seldom understood;
No honours ever made a bad call good.
That three-no-trumper shall be likewise barred
Whose one weak suit consists of one weak card.
How shocked he is to find he can't withstand
The other twelve in his opponent's hand!
Such would defend, with all that weakness known,
A camp that's guarded on three sides alone.
The foe attack the fourth, and with a cheer
March in with drums and trumpets through the rear.

That rescue bidder I shall always curse
Who from a bad suit calls me into worse;
Saves me, with nothing in his hand to score,
And leaves our plight more desperate than before.
No thanks the drowning man should feel for him
Who tries the life-save when himself can't swim.
Such partners, trickless when the new suit's played,
Ruin by rescue and impede with aid

Beware slam calls! How seldom these go right—
But twice or three times in a single night!
Yet some slam on despite their partner's frown,
For ever slamming and for ever down.
Think well before you make that boastful cry
And only slam when odds seem wondrous high.
Fools often bid it and as often fall;
The wise bid seldom—and make good their call.

Shun the false bid, for 'tis a valued rule
What fools th' opponent may the partner fool.
The husband bluffs and, woefully misled,
The trusting wife proceeds to lose her head,
Bids gaily on with stakes at half-a-crown,
Straight for disaster and five hundred down.
What anguish follows! Cries of straitened means,
Domestic sequels and sad bedroom scenes!

When doubling, never earn your partner's blame
By doubling your opponent into game
Merely because you vaguely understand
There might be something in that partner's hand.
Such doublers are like Wilfred, who with zeal
Asks all his friends to "Sampson's" for a meal,
With no resources bids them eat and swill,
Then cadges fivers when they've brought the bill.

This last best rule revere like sacred lore;
Write it in rubies: Always watch the score.
Calls may be simple if the score you seize,
But once the score's forgotten all's Chinese—
Rules lose their sense, conventions turn absurd,
False suits are offered, ev'ry bid's misheard,
Mere pigmy hands as giants masquerade
And hopeless ventures fail before they're played.
If other maxims I have failed to teach,
"Please watch the score" shall be my final speech.
Not when you've finished bidding but before,
Please watch—your poet begs you—watch the score!



"WOULD YOU KINDLY COME IN CLOSER, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AND KEEP THE PATHWAY CLEAR—WE DON'T WANT TO INFRINGE THE PARK REGULATIONS."

Letters from a Gunner

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I am now a Gunner in the Royal Regiment of Artillery, posted to the 1001st (A.A.) Battery. The description is, as you will appreciate, one of courtesy or form only; the completion of a number of forms, researches into your past history (I had to think a long time before I remembered your maiden name), and finally a short oath on a very battered Bible were not sufficient to convert an ordinary chartered accountant into a gunner. But I am a Gunner (you follow the distinction?), and in course of time I may climb through the rank of Bombardier (I long to be a Bombardier—why does the name remind me of French firemen?) to the glories of Sergeant.

I am technically Dismounted Cavalry. I regard that as most appropriate. Any close contact with a horse always tended to convert me into a Dismounted Chartered Accountant. Now I am allowed to put my puttees on upside-down (when I am issued with puttees), I expect to wear a smart pair of riding-breeches, my belt will be leather instead of webbing, and off-duty no swagger-cane for me; it will be

correct to carry a form of hunting-crop in one hand (placing the other round a girl? You know what dogs cavalymen are! How it brings back *The Three Musketeers*!).

Not only that. Our drill is different. There was a time when as an O.T.C. cadet I knew how to form fours. But not as Dismounted Cavalry form fours. Then we stood in two ranks. In some way I do not recall every other man got into a separate rank, so turning two into four, and then we turned right or left and marched away. A little complicated, but practice made us quite good at it. Now it is much easier. The front rank numbers off in fours, we just split the ranks into four and, heigh presto! we are on the move.

Furthermore we leave three large paces between each rank. These, I understand, are for the imaginary horses.

There is a good deal of imagination needed about this battery. Next time I write I will explain to you how it all works, but for the moment let us look at a gun itself. It has a complement of nine (I think nine—usually we have either about five or fourteen, depending upon by what whim or caprice the officer dealing with recruits is moved), of which the boss is, naturally, No. 1. Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4 have real jobs. No. 1

is foreman, No. 2 sits on one side of the gun and makes it go round and round, No. 3 sits on the other side and makes it go up and down (I hope I have got them on the right sides). The rest deal with the ammunition. There are dials which show Nos. 2 and 3 which way to move their handles. While the guns date back to 1918, the existing dials are much more recent. Mine says 1926 (shades of Mr. BALDWIN, A. J. COOK and the General Strike!). The latest dials will of course be quite different. So you see us, perched on the gun, following (some distance behind) an imaginary target, Nos. 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and possibly No. 9 working hard on the imaginary ammunition, and Nos. 2 and 3 following imaginary markings on the as yet unsupplied (perhaps legendary is the word) new dials. It has a delightful air of fantasy. I wonder if it would not be nicer to imagine the next war actually over. It would save a lot of expense and trouble and both sides could imagine that they had won.

But No. 1 is not imaginary. On the contrary. He runs round a great deal, pointing out the things that in the heat of the battle one has forgotten, and generally using a number of very concrete and realistic oaths. In his other existence he is a postman. I had always imagined postmen as somehow rather negative, hadn't you? Apparently they have it in them to break out. He is called Sutcliffe, but I hesitate to mention cricket to him.

Yet we have one optimist. Boy Killey. At the moment he says he earns a precarious living by riding a tradesman's cycle for a local grocer. I feel he looks on the bright side. "A good thing," he said, "we had a war in 1918. Else how would we be off for guns now?"

I look at the guns and at the year "1918" cut into them, and the name "Vickers," and I wonder where the men who fired them then are now. The guns have lasted.

But more next week.

Your loving Son,
HAROLD.

The Democrat

HEARING a familiar sound I turned into the *brasserie* and the voice of my old friend, Captain Romanescu, rose to a bellow, bringing the other side of Piccadilly Circus, which had hitherto been rather left out of it, into his full confidence.

"Ah," he remarked in a key normally reserved for air-raid warnings, "it is very good you are here. Also here is



"... BUT IN A FEW MONTHS, GENTLEMEN, I HOPE TO BE ABLE TO OFFER YOU SOMETHING CONCRETE."

my friend Miranos I have speak to you about many times. It is very nice for you to meet him. You remember, I have tell you he is one time my chief officer. Also we make the collision. We are the very old friends. Sure.

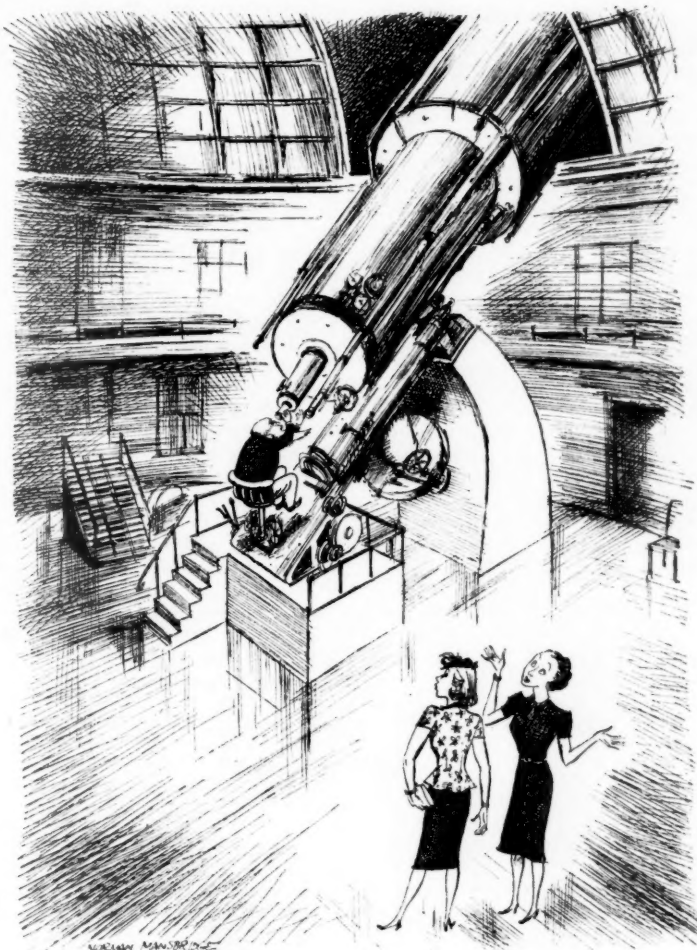
"Miranos is no more ship master. He make plenty money now. It is very interesting. In my country now he is very big man—politician. Sure. He is democrat. Just now the democrat in Balkania it is very good, because soon we make the democracy, just like England—the Parliament and the big railway-station and the Woolwort and the voting and maybe in five-ten years the Underground. The democracy like England is very good. I think it is the best." His voice sank to a whisper that could hardly be heard six tables away. "Miranos is buying the guns now.

"I am sorry Miranos cannot speak English. He is very clever chap, read many books. You must like him. Also because he is British subject sometimes. Sure. He is born in Cyprus. By so he understand very well the English democracy and he make very fine new system for the democracy in Balkania. It is very nice.

"Maybe you do not understand. Just now in Balkania the voting it is not good. Like this. The rich man he come to the peasant and he say, 'I give you two *tekani* you vote for me,' and another more rich man he say, 'I give you three *tekani*,' and the peasant vote for him. This is not the proper voting, like England. I think it is bribery. After the voting there is much trouble and shooting. One may say, 'I have pay you three *tekani* and you do not vote for me,' another man say, 'I have vote for you and you do not pay me. Why not?' It is not good.

"Miranos he make now the new system. I think it is much better. He say to the candidate, 'You must be democrat. You give me two-three thousand *tekani* and we make the proper democracy, like England. Also like United States, I think.' And so it is possible when the peasant say, 'Where is my three *tekani*?' the candidate he say, 'You go to hell. You are peasant, you must be a democrat. If you are not you must be crook and the democracy come and beat you up. Sure.' By so it is much better.

"Also Miranos he make many nice schemes for the football and the navy and the social legislate. For the unemployee he make a very good system. Just now in Balkania we have sometimes many unemployee, but the Government he does not help, he is no use. Nobody knows how many. This is very bad, not like Eng-



"MY HUSBAND LIVES IN A LITTLE WORLD OF HIS OWN!"

land. Miranos has make the system so the unemployee must register always to the police. The policeman he say, 'How is this? You are unemployee. You must be bad workman. How long are you unemployee?' Maybe he say, 'Two-three weeks.' The policeman he say, 'How do you buy food if you are unemployee two-three weeks? I think you must be thief. If you are also unemployee next week you must come to prison.' And so he will find the job sometimes. Also the policeman can make good counting and we know how many unemployee, like in England and United States. It is very important.

"Because he is seaman sometimes Miranos is very interested for the navy. He make the big clean-up. No more

this business for the captain of the warship to dump all the ammunition and take the cargo to Batoum or Istanbul at very cheap freight because he has no expense. I think this is not possible the same in English warship, but in Balkania it is very bad—spoil the freight very much. Miranos make the system so he must charge proper freight and must pay half to the Democrat party.

"Oh, he is very clever, Miranos. He is also make the constitution—the Prime Minister and the Board of Trade and the big bank and the traffic. I think in two-three months you will hear of Miranos very much even in England. I suppose he is Prime Minister soon. He is very, very big man. I think they shoot him sometimes."

Final Notice

THIS is to give notice to Messrs. Harrison and Fluke, Painters and Decorators (Estimates Free), that if any further representatives call round at No. 15, Musgrave Road without express invitation they will be tarred and feathered without charge, the work being carried out promptly and carefully by our own skilled employees.

I DO NOT WANT TO BE PAINTED AND DECORATED.

At least, I should like to be, but I am not going to be. It is a question of money. Messrs. Harrison and Fluke do not seem to understand about money. If I have told them once I have told them fifty times, in words of from three to five syllables, that much as the house needs a coat of paint and a little decoration I cannot at present afford it. I have explained to them that there are other calls on my purse. I have shown them my car and pointed out that when the wire which holds the doors on finally breaks a new machine will be necessary; and I have made it clear to the best of my

ability that we of Musgrave Road do not buy a new car and have our house painted in one and the same year. I even, on the occasion of their last call, discovered and laid before them my Final Notice from the Gas Company, in which the words WILL BE DISCONTINUED loom so menacingly in red. But they didn't care. They seemed to think, if they troubled to think about it at all, that this talk of money and creditors was some sort of whimsy on my part—all very well as a means of making conversation but without bearing on the fact that my gutters badly needed attention.

What right have they got to come round and tell me how shabby the house is looking?

It would be different if they were as careless about money after doing the job as they are before it. We might do business on those terms. But they aren't. They are worse than the Gas Company once they have forced you into the position of owing them something. I let Messrs. Harrison and Fluke loose in the dining-room about three years ago, and from that date until I paid them early last March they badgered me unmercifully. And look

at them now, fawning round the doorstep like a couple of cocker spaniels.

Keep out of it, Harrison, and you too, Fluke. If I ever am painted and decorated I'll have it done by True-love (Distempering a Speciality). I'd rather owe the money to him.

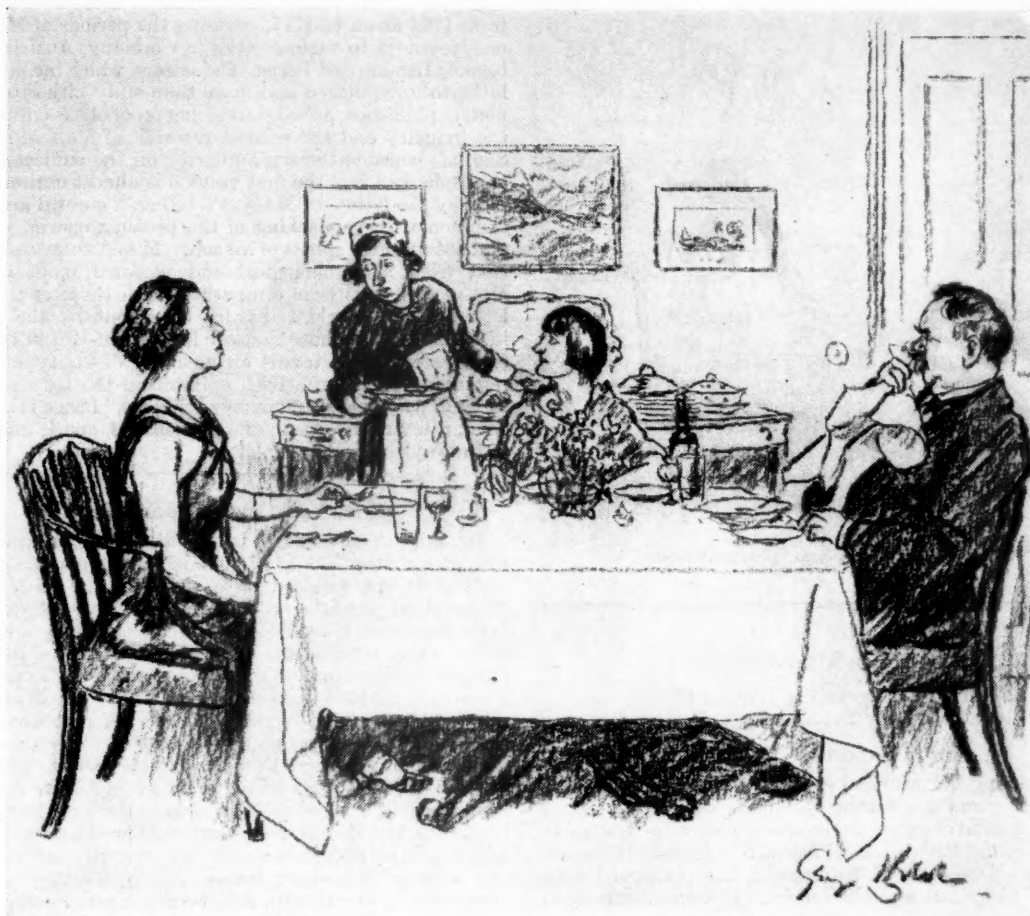
Here's another thing I detest about Painters and Decorators. When they are working at a house they assume the right to hang or otherwise affix one of their infernal boards on the front-gate announcing that Messrs. Harrison and Fluke are, in so many words, at work within. Who gave them this right? Not I, certainly, for they never ask me. No other trades or professions that I know of, except Landscape Gardeners, make so bold. The butcher, the baker and the man who comes to look at the cistern do not deface the frontal portions of my message with posters and slogans. The doctor, possibly through fear of displeasing the B.M.A., refrains from pinning his card to the fence when he comes in to look at my larynx. Why should I put up with it from Harrison and his accomplice, Fluke?

A man, says the Law, is entitled to the comfortable enjoyment of his



"THEY TALK ABOUT 'SEE NAPLES AND DIE,' BUT IT DIDN'T STRIKE ME AS BEING SO DREADFUL."

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The Temporary. "PLEASE 'M ARE YOU GENTRY, OR DO YOU STACK?"

dwelling-house, and I do not hesitate to assert that my enjoyment of No. 15, Musgrave Road, is gravely prejudiced when the board of the abominable Harrison is hanging outside. It is an impertinence and it angers me.

What about the legal rights of householders as to Nuisances?

I have been looking the point up in *Every Man's Own Lawyer*, a work of ripe scholarship particularly strong on what constitutes unsoundness in horses ("farcy, founder or fever in the feet, glanders, grease, grogginess, grunting, gutta serena or glass eye," together with such troubles as "mal-lenders and sallenders, stranglers, thick wind, thrush, wheezing, whistling, yellows or jaundice"), and I find it set down therein that a man may become responsible for a nuisance in various ways, "such as erecting and working

a tallow-furnace, limekiln, tan-pit, pigsty, smelting-house, dye-house, guano-warehouse, noisy forge or workshop, brew-house, glass-works, or by making a cesspool, or fixing a spout or any projection which causes or has a tendency to cause an unnatural quantity of rain-water to fall upon his neighbour's house or land, or by disturbing a long-established decoy by firing off guns nearby." It is clear that I cannot accuse Messrs. Harrison and Fluke under any of these heads. I only wish I could. If one or other of them were to fire off guns near any long-established decoy of mine I tell them frankly they would be for it; and the same thing goes for the erection of a guano warehouse. But as things are, it looks as if I had no remedy. In fact, the only help I get from *Every Man's Own Lawyer* is in the form of a warn-

ing. "The law," it tells me, "does not look with favour on the abatement of a nuisance by a private individual."

I take that to mean that I can't go out and haul down their board myself and sling it into a smelting-house.

But I say this to Harrison—and to you too, Fluke; I say that even if I were persuaded that only a coat of paint could save my house from falling down to-morrow, and even if your estimate were only half its present monstrous figure, and even if you gave an undertaking not to hang, exhibit or display your noxious notice on any part, portion or piece of my domain, dwelling-house, tan-pit, pig-sty or glass-works, even then I wouldn't let you do the job.

Because why?

Because I HAVEN'T GOT ANY MONEY.
H. F. E.



"WELL, I CALL IT DASHED UNGENTLEMANLY!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Mr. Churchill's Oratory

IN collecting the principal speeches which during the last half-dozen years his father has made on foreign affairs and the question of national defence—*Arms and the Covenant: Speeches by the Right. Hon. Winston S. Churchill* (HARRAP, 18/-)—MR. RANDOLPH S. CHURCHILL has performed both an act of piety and a public service. Not only, in spite of their inevitable repetitions, are they excellent reading—and to read them straight through is vividly to recall events which, in the rapid changes of these years, have been apt to be obliterated by the next startling pattern in the kaleidoscope—but they are packed with political wisdom. Rhetoric there is in them and piercing wit, but neither the flowers nor the thorns can conceal the deep-rooted sincerity from which they spring. The quality indeed which most strikes one in them is the sobriety of their realism. MR. CHURCHILL has sometimes been rebuked as an alarmist, but his alarms have all too often been shown to have been justified. He is essentially consistent too; for though he begins as an isolationist and ends as the advocate of alliances the change of attitude corresponds with a fundamental change in the European situation. Of plans for disarmament MR. CHURCHILL was always scornful—insisting, with logic and humanity, that disarmament should be preceded by redress of legitimate grievances. Now he is the gadfly of the Ministers concerned with defence; but that he is a constructive gadfly the last two speeches here printed, dealing with eventualities in the Danube basin, alone would prove.

Mozart Under The Microscope

The steadily-increasing mass of Mozartiana is enriched by Miss EMILY ANDERSON's monumental edition of *The Letters of Mozart and His Family* (MACMILLAN, 18/-), which bids fair

to supersede all existing collections. Her first volume, to be followed by two more in the course of the year, carries us from 1762 down to 1777, covering the periods of MOZART's nine journeys to various cities in Germany, Austria, Italy, besides London and Paris. The letters, which include a few hitherto unpublished and more than sixty hitherto incompletely published, afford convincing proof of the enthusiasm, the industry and the patient research of Miss ANDERSON. She has consulted every authority on the subject in both hemispheres. But the first volume is almost entirely occupied by the letters of MOZART's father, a shrewd and lively commentator, yet lacking in the peculiar charm, vivacity and natural high spirits of his son. Miss ANDERSON's claim that from a psychological and personal point of view MOZART's letters bear comparison with those of the great letters of the world is hardly borne out by the present instalment. But those that are here given—all in their unexpurgated form—reveal an amazing diversity of mood, reminding one of the Irish epitaph on the lady who was "bland, passionate, and deeply religious," for he is by turns devout, unbridled, acute and nonsensical, gentle and gross, but always human.

Mr. Van Druten Looks Back

MR. JOHN VAN DRUTEN is not one of those dramatists who at a mature age have gone in for the gamble of play-writing as one would take a ticket in the Irish Sweep. Although he comes of prudent Dutch business stock he was born with such a passion for the stage that as a child he toiled at a complicated game of dab-theatre in which imaginary plays, instead of the usual small boy's cricketers, made runs, and his passion survived nineteen years of strict upbringing in which he never met an actor or went inside a stage-door. There is much comfort for young dramatists in his autobiography, *The Way to the Present* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 10/6), a quietly-written record of his life up to the time when *Young Woodley* (finished in three weeks but long held up by the English censorship) was produced in America and began to make his name. He arrived with difficulty but without influence; before *Young Woodley* his only adventure in the theatre had been a single Sunday night production. Those who expect stage-gossip will be disappointed, but others will find an honest and interesting picture of family life in those suburbs which so fascinate MR. VAN DRUTEN, who still, when in London, plans his work on long tramps through its unfashionable districts. The book is



"IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS, DEAR; WE'VE JUST RUN OUT OF PETROL."



"OPPOSITION."

First Town Councillor (who had recently been to Venice). "NOW THAT WE'VE A PEOPLE'S PARK, AND A LAKE IN IT, I SHOULD SUGGEST THAT HALF A DOZEN GONDOLAS MIGHT BE PURCHASED, AS THEY'D GIVE QUITE A——"

Second Ditto (untraveller). "OH, I DON'T SEE THE GOOD OF HAVIN' ANY MORE O' THEM FOREIGN BIRDS! WE'VE PLENTY O' DUCKS AN' GEESSE ALREADY! 'T ANY RATE A PAIR WOULD BE ENOUGH TO BREED FROM. AS TO 'ALF A DOZEN, I CONSIDER IT'D BE A WASTE O' PUBLIC MONEY, AN' I'LL OPPOSE IT TOOTH AND——" [They don't part friends.]

Charles Keene, July 8th, 1882.

likely to be less popular than elsewhere in Wales, at one of whose universities he spent a depressing three years as lecturer in law.

Green Cotton Nightcap Country

There are gardeners who, having got into bed and lit the lamp, adjust a hot-water-bottle, or throw off a superfluous blanket, and settle down to plan future victories with the aid of a book. To the more easy-going of these—those who are not unduly scornful when the garden as a lovesome-thing-God-wot diversifies hints on the use of soot and recipes for rose vinegar—one would cordially commend *Gardener's Nightcap* (CAPE, 8/6), in which Mrs. MURIEL STUART has assembled a pleasant medley of picturesque suggestions, useful promptings and admirable caveats. Among the last-

named one can particularly endorse her distaste for the garden that is "a blaze of colour" one minute and a collection of dry kecksies the next; and her plea for a more lavish use of the nobler evergreens, box, sweet laurel and yew. She favours too the homely French custom of letting your pot-herbs fraternise with your flowers and treating your orchard as the best of all sites for a garden-seat. In fact she is the sworn ally and good friend of the modest estate, though from her knowledgeable dealing with rare plants you suspect her own domain of ampler dimensions.

A Murderer of Method

An interesting new twist is given to the common crime-story in *Portrait of a Scoundrel* (MURRAY, 7/6), which describes the measures taken by an accomplished physician to

delete the three lives intervening between himself and a vast fortune. One would hardly maintain that Mr. EDEN PHILLPOTTS has rendered the self-portrait of his imaginary villain a credible one; but taken as the extreme product of a world whose scientific knowledge has outstripped its conscience *Dr. Irwin Temple-Fortune* is a fine formal exponent of the Hyde side of *Dr. Jekyll*. The sinister decorum of his reminiscences is heightened by a sound literary technique; and the pleasure which some of us might hesitate to extract from watching him tip his two brothers, his nephew and his nephew's prepossessing nurse over the edge of eternity is undeniably sustained by the competence of his narrative. As a murderer he does not always run true to form—in intention he is rather a witch-doctor than a wielder of weapons. But even the somewhat crude elimination of his second brother has the merit of turning the proximate defeat of more subtle methods into a clinching victory for cold iron.

Night Lights

Sir SEYMOUR HICKS, who is not above turning out a book in his lighter moments, has just produced *Night Lights* (CASSELL, 10/6). For this he has invented a couple of spokesmen, *Alf* and *Edward*, who indulge in a series of easy-going talks on men and matters (or, as he puts it, life, love and ladies), with an interpolated monograph on certain distinguished actresses by a person named *Semorix*, who appears to be also an actor. The author's countless friends and admirers will expect to find good things in this book, and they will not be disappointed. Quite early there is a capital description of a cabaret, with the usual lady thrown about like a chilled carcass at the docks, and a little later on a blistering comment on a hard-faced nagger who deserved a husband who eats biscuits in bed. The remark that ELLEN TERRY "never suffered from being over-punctual" could hardly be more delicately put, and equally good in the opposite way is the criticism of too many "young ladies and gentlemen (on the stage to-day) who ought never to be seen because they can't be heard." Well-known names abound, and the excellent *Alf*, who does most of the talking, appears to have known the owners of all of them; his praise of certain dramatic critics is most disarming. But the most popular part of the book will be the contribution of *Semorix*, in which he deals from first-hand knowledge with a galaxy of past and present stage stars, ranging from BERNHARDT to DELYSIA. And here one is delighted to convict him of a bloomer. *Mrs. Candour* did not say that comparisons were odorous. Bless her dear heart! She didn't even say "Palabras, neighbour Vergus!"



CONVERSATION PIECE

"I DREAMT I MET NAPOLEON LAST NIGHT."
 "WHAT WAS HE LIKE?"
 "ENTHUSIASTIC."
 "WHAT ABOUT?"
 "HE DIDN'T SAY."

than fulfils the promise that Mr. INNES had already shown.

Fears and Fancies

Speaking of clues, on page 285 of *The Coroner Doubts* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) Mr. *Tolefree* remarked, "Well, it rather stuck out, you know." Mr. R. A. J. WALLING's agreeable detector spoke no more than the truth. For "it" did not only stick out, "it" seemed absolutely to bulge. Apart, however, from *Tolefree's* getting more slowly off the mark than usual, this is a most pleasant and easy tale to read, and its scenes are placed in refreshing surroundings. The name of *Lim-penny's* murderer is not unduly difficult to spot.

More Coals to Newcastle

"AN ALARM CLOCK GIVEN AWAY FREE WITH EACH PRAM."
 Notice in Preston Shop Window.

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Facts and Flights

To write an absorbingly interesting autobiography before one has lived thirty years is a rare achievement, and emphatically Miss JEAN BATTEN deserves to be congratulated upon *My Life* (HARRAP, 8/6). It would be idle to pretend that she is a literary stylist, but she has a real gift for straightforward narrative, and her accounts of these record-breaking flights are saved completely from monotony by her keen observation and by her joy in the pioneer work that she was doing. Full justice, however, would not be paid to her if she were regarded solely as a wonderful flier, for over and over again she shows that she is exceptionally clear-sighted and has many ideas about the future of aviation. Maps of the great flights would have been welcome, but for what they have received good air-minded Britons will be sincerely thankful.

Wild Weather

In putting *Lament for a Maker* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) into the mouths of several people Mr. MICHAEL INNES created a difficulty and then confidently and completely proceeded to conquer it. Without in any way depreciating our contemporary writers of detective fiction, it may be said that their work is not especially noteworthy for its style; but no one can read this successor to *Death at the President's Lodging* and *Hamlet, Revenge!* and not be impressed by Mr. INNES's literary ability. It may be that this story of queer *Ranald Guthrie* in his Scottish castle may not satisfy those who want their thrillers stark and simple. But both as a novel and as a tale of detection it more

Charivaria

"WOMEN with a great deal of money ought to marry business men," states a writer. Their main difficulty, however, will be to avoid doing so.

★ ★ ★

Just in Case of Accidents

"An invitation from the Yorkshire Electric Power Co. for the members to visit Thornhill power station on June 25th was accepted. The Surveyor was instructed to have the mortuary kept clean."

South Yorkshire Times.

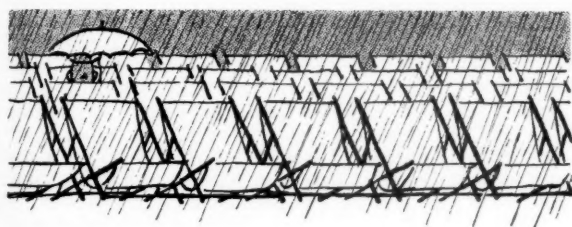
★ ★ ★

According to a scientist, if a match were to be struck on the moon it would lead to endless explosions. In consequence, smokers are advised to continue to strike theirs on the box.

★ ★ ★

A sports-writer says that something drastic must be done to prevent all our tennis championships going across the Atlantic to America. Such, for instance, as holding the next Wimbledon tournament in the States?

★ ★ ★



A comedian at a seaside summer show has remarked that the rain is his biggest rival. Where it beats him, of course, is in its patter.

★ ★ ★

A moneylender has written a book. As might be expected, the reader's interest is firmly gripped from beginning to end.

★ ★ ★

"By means of piezo-electric quartz crystals hundreds of persons can now talk on one telephone line at the same time."—*The Times*.

What's new in this?

★ ★ ★

A business man attributes his early success to the fact that with every pair of trousers he sold he gave a pair of braces free. And that's how he kept his sales up.



"It is comforting to know that come what may there will be no actual shortage of meat for many years," declares a writer. So, after all, the times are *not* out of joint.

★ ★ ★

"Bishop Sherrill conducted the first part of the simple Episcopal ceremony, and Dr. Peabody took it up at the point where the couple exchanged their cows."

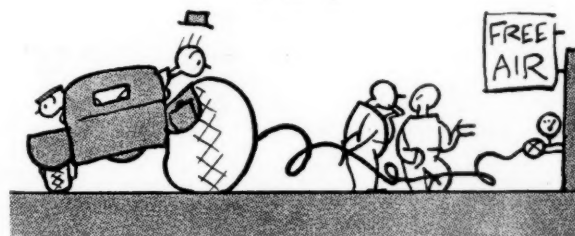
New York Paper.

Bishop SHERRILL seems to have known what was coming.

★ ★ ★

The cricket team of Dutch girls in this country, according to a critic, show masterly restraint in their batting. This is due, we understand, to a local rule in Holland which decrees that over the windmill is out.

★ ★ ★



"The moon has no air or water," announces a scientist. We know a petrol station like that.

★ ★ ★

"Shooting off Southend Pier at that speed it would travel three-quarters of a mile before it hit the water."

Captain Eyston, on his car "Thunderbolt."

Assuming of course that the tide was in.

★ ★ ★

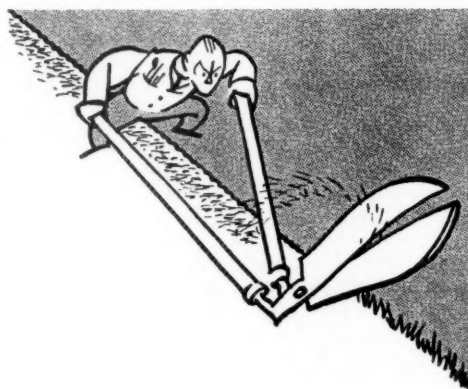
At a recent county butter-making contest two milk-maids came to blows. It seems that they got in one another's whey.

★ ★ ★

A two-headed chicken which was hatched in an incubator at Chelmsford died the same day. So much for the theory that two heads are better than one.

★ ★ ★

A dentist has been sued by a patient for extracting the wrong tooth. It is understood that the former would now be delighted to pull out the right one for nothing.



The Age of Old Elephants

(With acknowledgments to another fascinating series of letters
in our greatest daily newspaper.)

THE age of old elephants
Can never be told,
They are older than the mountains,
They are terribly old;
But the dreams of their childhood
Remain with them yet,
For they always remember
They cannot forget.

I knew an old elephant
Erstwhile on whom
Hannibal had ridden
For the wars against Rome,
And sad was his bearing
Because he could recall
The dying at Libyssa
Of Hannibal.

I had an old elephant
Who brought back the news
Of the taking of the city
Of Syracuse,
And his forehead was wrinkled
And his eyes deep-sunk,
He had bound for remembrance
Two knots in his trunk.

I saw an old elephant
At Poona one night
Who had loved in his hot youth
A cow that was white.
Lord Xerxes had slain her,
And through the long suns
Her true love found solace
In hashish and buns.

The age of old elephants
Cannot be told
They are older than the mountains,
They are frightfully old.
They forget not their sorrows,
Their joys and their crimes,
They all went to Eton
And they write to *The Times*. EVOE.

The Wireless Man

LOOKING west (with a touch of north) from my study window I can see the property of the Wireless Man. He is called the Wireless Man about here for reasons which will become sufficiently clear as we go along. Of course we are all wireless men in a sense—I mean we all have sets and switch them on at six o'clock in the evening to make sure that it is six o'clock, but we aren't called wireless men, if you see the distinction.

When he first bought his house here the Wireless Man caused a lot of comment by putting up a long pole in a corner of his garden. It stood perhaps thirty feet out of the ground and it was white with a little bump or noddle on the top. We disliked it intensely. We live in a quiet residential neighbourhood, where flamboyant flagstaves are

out of place. "This isn't Portsmouth," said Mrs. Rannigan with a good deal of truth.

We took it to be a flagstaff, you see, because it was put up early in 1937 and everyone naturally supposed it to have some bearing on the Coronation—a circumstance which did nothing to diminish the flames of resentment. We are all patriots about here, but we don't think a man is any more loyal because he unfurls his flag at the top of a long pole instead of hanging it out of the bathroom window. We said it was a silly sort of thing to do, and we meant it.

But, as it turned out, no flag floated from the summit in Coronation Week. Long before that a thin wire had been stretched from the pole to the house and the astonishing, the incredible truth burst upon us. An aerial! An aerial in Pettigrew Gardens! Such an outrage upon the social sensibilities of the district had not been inflicted since Captain Crankman hanged himself with an ordinary pair of braces at No. 28 six years ago.

"We shall be keeping hens next," said Mrs. Rattigan bitterly.

There was a general feeling that a deputation should wait upon the Wireless Man to inform him that in the present advanced stage of receiving-set development no aerial was required, and, if necessary, to urge upon him the definite lowering of tone of the neighbourhood brought about by his unsightly erection: but before anything could be done a violent storm threw the mast to the ground, breaking it clean off, we were happy to observe, at a point about three feet above the socket. I gave a little sherry-party to celebrate the event—in my study, from which a particularly good view of the ruins could be obtained.

But there are some people who think no more of the clearly-expressed displeasure of the heavens than they do of the equally marked annoyance of their neighbours. Within three weeks the Wireless Man had replaced his fallen idol by two poles, each of them ten feet higher than the first. These poles he set one at either side of his garden and between them he hung a double line of wires held apart at each end and in the middle by cross-pieces of wood or other material. Finally from the centre of this system two further wires ran with all speed to the house, where they were lost to view. The whole contrivance, apart from the poles, could be raised or lowered by means of halyards affixed top and bottom to the masts. To lower the poles themselves an Act of God, so far as one could see, would again be necessary, and for this we prayed earnestly and without avail.

Colonel Palfrey came round for a smoke and viewed the new erection. "Is the man going to run trolley-buses," he asked plaintively, "or what?" Colonel Palfrey is much liked in Pettigrew Gardens, and this remark of his about trolley-buses went round like wildfire. Nor did it suffer much in the process. I overheard Mrs. Damson telling Mrs. Tollerby about it. "That's a wonderful arrangement you've got there," says the Colonel—he was passing the garden at the time, you see—"When does the service start?" "What service?" says the Wireless Man. "The trolley-bus service," says the Colonel, and off he went before the man could say a word. You should have seen his face. He was wild!

"Were you there, dear?" asked Mrs. Tollerby rather unkindly.

"No-o. I wasn't actually there. But I heard all about it."

Of course the truth is, as I suppose we ought to have guessed all along, that the Wireless Man transmits. He is an active, not merely a passive wireless man. He thinks it is more blessed to send out than to receive, and I dare say he may be right. I discovered the Wireless Man's secret one afternoon when I had to call at his house about a golf-ball which I believed to have strayed on to his property. We found five balls altogether in the shrubbery at the end



SENT FROM COVENTRY

(A remarkable item in this week's Historical Pageant of Birmingham.)



"YOU SEE, THE SELECTION COMMITTEE HAS DONE ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT MY LETTER."

nearest my garden, and I began to feel just a tiny bit awkward. But he was really very nice about it. "They always multiply like rabbits, once they get in a garden," he said. "Come in and have something."

We went in and had something and then he showed me his wireless room. It took me right back to the early days of wireless, I mean the days when people used to make their own receiving-sets and nothing was ever properly finished. Only this was more so. There were great sheets of vulcanite, if that black stuff is vulcanite, just lying about loose with bulbs sprouting out of them, and innumerable red wires dashing hither and thither and finally pouring off one end into a kind of black box. There was a bench covered with brass fittings and screwdrivers and coils and coils of wire. If you threw a bomb into a submarine you might get something of the same air of hopeless confusion.

"I'm putting in a new thingummy," said the Wireless Man, as if that explained everything. He didn't actually say thingummy, but that was what he meant. "Then I shall be able to talk to America."

"Go to it," I said. "It's high time somebody did talk to America."

The rest of our talk was concerned with technicalities with which I will not weary you, but the upshot of our meeting was that I am now strongly pro-Wireless Man. I look out of my study window at his great poles with positive affection. "One day," I say to myself, "when I know the Wireless Man a little better, I shall get him to let me talk to America myself. I shall sit amongst those bulbs and wires and switches and I shall crank her up, and when the time comes I shall say, 'Is that the United States of America? Then listen to me.' And I shall talk and talk and talk."

I think that what I shall have to say to the United States will surprise them.

H. F. E.

Ballade of Musical Criticism

ABOUT the singing of Miss What's-her-name
The total facts are ours, in order due;
We know the "texture" she contrived to frame,
And all about the "vocal line" she drew;
From "rhythmic pulse" to "sense of tonal hue"
No detail wants in all the splendid list
Of what the singer did or did not do:
And "Mr. Jones was the accompanist."

What can it mean? Some deed of hidden shame,
A trill misfingered or a tie askew?
Or should we smile and knowingly exclaim,
"If Jones was there then all went safely through"?
Had he a drink too many, or too few?
Swam his faint senses in the nerveless mist
Of night-starvation or the blear-eyed flu
When Mr. Jones was the accompanist?

Alas! he knows thee now, deceitful Fame,
As mean when found as arduous to pursue!
For this the wild arpeggio he o'ercame
And fought with scales till the loud rooster crew!
Ay me! his cuttings (throned in careful glue),
With myriad tongues conspiring to insist
Ten thousand times upon the well-weighed view
That Mr. Jones was the accompanist!

Envoy

Prince, I have seen the charm he holds for you:
Should sharper pens refute your general gist,
One point shall stand irrefragably true;
For Mr. Jones *was* the accompanist.

The New Slogan

EVERY time the Government of Eire decides to have another General Election—and that is more and more often as time goes on—Mick Doyle makes a point of attending every political meeting held in and around Rathberry. "There's two things about the whole collision of them," he has often said of the speakers of all parties—"they remember, an' they never forget."

The newest Election having been a really rushed affair, all the meetings were held within a few days, and frenzied orators thundered their political views from the roughly-boarded platform in the Square.

They were all violent, but Mick was inclined to give the palm to one red-haired speaker, who, in spite of a heavy cold in his head, had, in Mick's opinion, succeeded in hurling the most virulent abuse at all those politicians who disagreed with him. As Mick told Delia in the comprehensive way that emphasises every peculiarity possessed by the person he describes and includes them in one sentence: "You'd like to be listenin' to that lad-do," he said admiringly, "for he employs more venom than the whole lot, an' he does have great performances upon the Nasal Guitar."

Personally Delia has no sort of use for election campaigns, especially when they follow each other so very quickly. To her the slogan "Up, Dev!" painted on the parapet of the bridge years ago and refreshed from time to time, says all that is necessary. She has even been known to refuse flatly to walk as far as the grey School-house in order to record her vote; and to Mick this is another proof of the ingratitude of women to the pioneers of their own sex.

"Plenty of them med holy shows of theirselves, baulkin' at nourishment an' hommerin' members of Parliament," he has said of the early Suffragettes—"ay, an' pourin' corrosive acids into letter-boxes to get the vote for the likes of you, an' then you'd think bad of goin' from here to the School to put down your preferments." Which annoyed Delia very much. "If it was me they had in mind," she said indignantly, "they needn't have gone to such excess, for I have enough to do about runnin' to vote for people that's no sooner in but they're out agen seemin'ly; an' then you may start it all over another time, wid their 'Wan, two, three—Go!'"

In spite of her lack of interest Mick continued to offer a full report of every

speech that was made. "We had the Fine Gaels last night," he told her, "an' there was one of them that couldn't say annything good enough about th' English Empire. 'Whatever else they are,' says he, 'they're out-an'-out Chriskian people, an' there's no two ways of sayin' it but they do be fully civilized, an' Misther Neville Chamberlain that's at the head of it is as good as anny of them. I dunno,' he says, 'but he's better.' An' there wasn't as much as a pitaty pelted at him for what he said." Remembering some of the allusions made in the previous campaign, Delia looked faintly surprised but said nothing.

Mick's report of the meeting staged by the Independent party differed amazingly little, though one speaker had started promisingly enough. "Them ould say-ports is gone into great dis-repute wid the dent of age," he acknowledged, according to Mick. "Still an' all, it was terrible nice of Misther Neville Chamberlain to give them back to us the way he did. You could sail the seventeen seas," the fella says, "an' as long as you take shelter beneath the British flag," says he, "there's no one will dar to say yes, ay, or no. There's only an odd acre of ground in the whole unnyverse," says he, "no matter how far you'll go, but you'll be apt to find that flag floatin'."

And the speaker ignored the fact that for years past no travelling whatever would have been necessary to the native of Southern Ireland who wished to find a spot unsheltered by the Union Jack.

"There was one of them agricultured

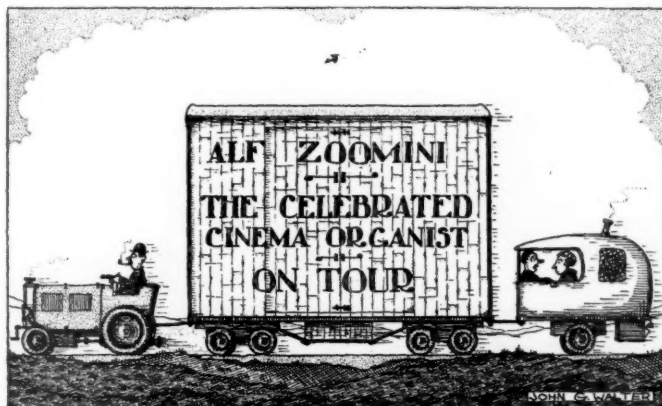
parties, an' they went on the very same," Mick reported again. "I never knowed all them lads to be in as much agreement over annything as they are about Misther Neville Chamberlain," he said thoughtfully.

The meeting conducted by members of the present Government was a little more exciting, though they too showed a tendency to dwell on the sterling qualities of the British nation in general and of its Prime Minister in particular. But at any rate they proved to be too much for the temporary platform, and they sank through the splintering boards, still shouting the merits of their former foes. "There was a rale fleshy fella hurted his leg in the crash," Mick told Delia, "an' they put him in the hospital in Ballykealy; an' me brother told me he was the very same as a markee in the bed, an' whenever he'd give out ramblin' talk it'd be about Misther Neville Chamberlain, me brother says."

With a snort of indignation Delia left him still talking and went down the wide street to the corner shop. Presently she came back and was in time to meet Mick, whose work was finished for the day.

"I declare to man but they have the words changed upon the bridge below," she called, and Mick showed real interest. "Are they gone back to 'Up, COSGRAVE!'" he wanted to know. "Arrah, not at all," Delia said, "they had only to altherate the one letter, an' there they were." "Well, what is it now?" Mick urged, and she laughed sarcastically. "What else would it be," she said, "only 'Up, NEV!'"

Mick went on his way. D. M. L.



"IT MAY BE A BIT OF TROUBLE, BUT I FIND THAT I CAN ONLY DO MYSELF JUSTICE ON MY OWN INSTRUMENT."

Eton and Harrow

"Of course I've been so tremendously busy with our A.R.P. that I haven't had a minute for anything else this summer. But now that everyone in the village knows exactly where to scatter to, I felt that I might come away to London for a few days to see some of my friends."

"But, Evie, surely in Cornwall——"

"That's just what Austin says, but I always believe in being ready, and after all, they might easily bomb Plymouth and then have one left over and drop that on St. Ermytrude. You forget we are only twelve miles from the railway, and it seems to me very likely that they would strike at that. Besides, my nephew Mervyn, who flies—you remember my brother Harold: this is his boy, doing so well in the Air Force, though of course they aren't all quite gentlemen, and I remember his saying how easy it was to lose one's way in the air. Or even supposing an aeroplane was driven out towards the Atlantic, it seems to me only common sense that it would want to get rid of its bombs before it left land, and what more likely place than St. Ermytrude? And then where should we be if we weren't prepared? No, Agnes, I am sure we have been wise. The cellars at the Vicarage were gas-proofed early in

February, and I feel certain we shall never regret it."

"Really, Evie, I think you are taking rather an alarmist view. Edward was told by someone who Really Knows that there is no chance of their coming as far west as Kensington. We are all carrying on just as usual and refusing to be rattled."

"Well, my dear, I can only hope that you won't be sorry."

"That boy Mervyn who you were telling me of—was he Alice's son?"

"Oh, no, Agnes. Harold married Etta Smith, you know, *en seconde nocces*, and this is their boy."

"Haden't she already a daughter? What became of her?"

"She married. They weren't very pleased, I understand. She is living somewhere in the North, near Birmingham or some place of that kind. His name was Saunders. Spelt the wrong way, unfortunately."

"Isn't it an extraordinary thing that quite sensible nice girls can make themselves look as they do, in these hats? And when I think what my father would have said if he had seen any grandchild of his with painted nails!"

"Agnes, did I tell you that I met Isobel yesterday afternoon? And Herbert, of course, looking so unhappy. I thought it cruel of Isobel to bring him up here just when his delphiniums are looking their best. I asked her how

Caroline was, and she was just telling me some delightful news when at that moment there was such a noise of clapping and cheering—a wicket fell, I suppose, or something—that I wasn't able to hear *when*."

"Oh, look, Evie! Isn't that the Blenkinsops? How very plain that younger girl of theirs has grown! But of course I always say that the Judge—Ada Blenkinsop's father, I mean—was one of the very ugliest of men, and recollect my mother's saying the same thing, though Ada herself is a very handsome woman and a dear friend of mine."

"Where are you lunching, Agnes?"

"I'm not quite certain. I see that the Halls have their arbour as usual, and of course I'm quite certain that if I met Blanche and Oswald they would ask me at once, but I don't quite like to go there without. One is so very obvious walking up to one of those arbours—I mean, it isn't as if they were on the way to anywhere, is it? One can't just stroll past casually. . . ."

"Evie, I quite forgot; George told me that Grace Hetherington's boy was playing to-day."

"Playing in the match? But surely her boy can't be still at Eton?"

"At Harrow, dear."

"Well, that is interesting. Get up just a moment, Agnes, you are sitting on my skirt. I want to turn round so that I can see the cricket. But naturally if Harrow is in he wouldn't be there, would he? Unless he happened to be *in*, I mean."

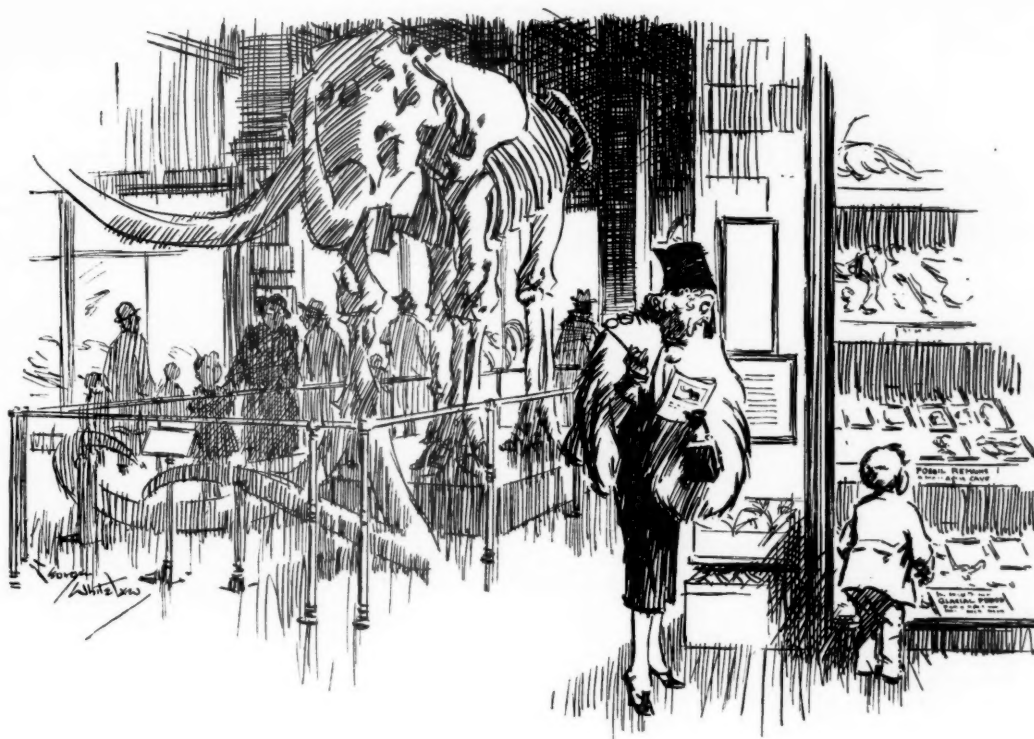
"I think Harrow are fielding now, Evie, but I haven't my long-distance spectacles with me."

"Oh, no, Agnes, I feel sure you are mistaken; that was *yesterday*. If you remember, dear, we've all been walking all over the field since then. I remember distinctly, because I met Florrie near that roped-off bit where they bat, and she told me how dreadfully ill Harriet had been. What a pity! It would have been interesting to see that boy; though of course you never knew his parents so well as I did, and I suppose you would hardly remember old Mrs. Hetherington——"

"Why, Blanche, how delightful to see you! And is Oswald here too? He is? Isn't that splendid! Such a jolly family gathering, I always think this is. My dear, it is most kind of you, but I had promised Cyril to go with him to the Cavalry Club tent for tea. Yes, for tea. It was tea, we said, wasn't it, Evie? No, we've let our house now to some charming people who, funnily enough, turned out to be connexions of Alice's. I am *sur la branche* for the moment. To lunch? That would be



"I ASKED FOR A CONSIDERED CRITICISM OF PLATO.
NOT A DIATRIBE."



"AND WHAT DID YOU DO IN THE ICE AGE, GRANNIE?"

delightful, Blanche. I shall so enjoy seeing Oswald and having a good talk to him. Really, in the stands there are so many people, and so much noise going on, and clapping, and things always happening on the field, it's all so distracting that one hasn't a chance of really seeing anybody—not what I call seeing them properly."

A Hard Case

DEAR MR. PUNCH,—Listen to the hard case of a patriot.

I was born in one of our great Dominions (on which the sun never sets) but of parentage ineradicably Scotch. However, the latter fact would have had little signification in marking me out for vengeance had I stayed in that great Dominion among fellows all in like case, except that *their* parents might have been English or Irish or Welsh—or perhaps only their great-grandparents. No doubt I should, for all that, have been a native of the natives.

Unfortunately for my peace of mind I came to these isles at an early age, and soon after developed a patriotic

conscience. I now had to choose a native land, for I soon realised I had a choice of two. I am sorry to say I wavered between Scotland (which was romantic) and the great Dominion (which was distant), and this was the beginning of my fall. My conscience soon began to whisper that I was using my (indeterminate) allegiance for purposes of purely personal prestige; to be plain, I stated my origin according as I thought it would impress the company—the Dominion for its distance or Scotland for its romance. I therefore decided to stick to the Dominion for the future (but I am afraid its distance had something to do with that).

My conscience now had the grace to leave me pretty tranquil for some years, till a further perplexing circumstance made its appearance, which I have reason to fear has rendered me an outcast for ever from society and my conscience. Despite the undoubted attractions of both my motherlands, I now found I *liked England better than either*. This novel and indeed startling passion in the otherwise more or less blameless life of one born in a great

Dominion of Scotch descent seems like to prove my undoing. I no longer thrill on hearing the distant bagpipe in the deserts of the metropolis (I fear my former leanings in this direction are largely to be laid at the door of my formidable conscience); the accents of the great Dominion leave me little warmer than its own chilled meat.

Now, everyone will understand the amazement which greets me as the first known person of Scotch descent who doesn't *particularly* like Scotland and who avows the fact without shame. Similarly, one born in a great Dominion who can hear it called a Colony without being moved to *very* great wrath and scorn is an enigma better shunned by any fellow-Dominioner who discovers the awful truth. Where can the pariah hide his shamed head? Or what will convince Society that he isn't pretending and will sooner or later confess? Nowhere and nothing, I fear. In the meantime I am going to cheer England on in the Test, despite the pain I am bound in my conscience to suffer should Australia (D.V.) lose.

Yours faithfully,

IAN MCKANGAROO.

At the Pictures

ASSORTED

THE honours of the programme at the Carlton are taken easily by *North Sea*, a British documentary film about the way an Aberdeen trawler in difficulties in a gale was helped by Wick radio station. I say "was" and not "is" because the difficulties, like all else in the film, were authentic: the *John Gillman* really did get her pumps choked and the crew really did have to work at the hand-pumps for forty-eight hours. This is a first-rate short film and is full of natural actors—I liked particularly the skipper who refused to go to sea on a Friday, until he heard that it was *MATTIE MAIR* of the *John Gillman* who needed his help. You should make an effort to see this.

About the Carlton's chief offering, *You and Me*, there is no need to take so much trouble. "Produced and directed by *FRITZ LANG*"—it sounds promising, but it proves to be unsatisfactory. *SYLVIA SIDNEY* has her usual part (I can remember hardly one picture of hers in which prison bars haven't loomed over her, either fore or aft) and *GEORGE RAFT* has his; but Mr. *LANG* seems to have given himself the wrong ticket. *You and Me* is an odd mixture of sociology, farce, and melodrama, and its style ranges from "expressionism," with rhythmic stylised chanting, to the most flat-footed comedy conventions. The parts that are most interesting technically—the ex-convicts' reunion, for instance, with its flash-backs to the prison—don't fit in with the rest, some of which belongs in a light fantastic comedy. By means of blackboard calculations Miss *SIDNEY* shows a group of thugs that crime literally doesn't pay. Very well; but she convinces them. The picture is interesting and sometimes amusing, but it won't do.

There do not seem to be many obvious signs of *JULIEN DUVIVIER*'s direction in *L'Homme du Jour* at the Berkeley, a light-hearted "musical" in which *MAURICE CHEVALIER* returns to the language of his birth. Perhaps I don't know the *DUVIVIER* touch well enough and am just one more of the people with half-baked memories of *Pépé le Moko*. Nothing spectacular, possibly that is what I mean: merely the skilful, witty handling, the beautifully competent grasp of character that we have grown to expect in nearly all French films. Mr.—I mean, of course, M.—*CHEVALIER* sings several songs, in

his far from inimitable but still unbeaten manner: one or two as a stage-struck electrician, one as the same electrician drunk (at a dinner given in his honour), one as *MAURICE CHEVALIER*,



GIVING THEM THE WORKS

Helen Roberts . . . SYLVIA SIDNEY

and one as *MAURICE CHEVALIER*, the electrician and a gramophone singing a trio. Perhaps that last counts as more than one. Certainly I should think that to all concerned in the



SONG-SERVICE AFTER DINNER

Cormier de la Creuse . ALERME
Alfred Boulard . . . MAURICE CHEVALIER

making of the scene it must have seemed like several dozen.

Also at the Berkeley is the famous American documentary, *PAUL LORANTZ*'s *The River*: half-an-hour of admirable stuff about the Mississippi,

and the way it has been allowed in the last fifty years to help in the reduction to near-desert of millions of acres of farmland. Not a moment is wasted, visually; but I do venture (a small voice) to suggest that several words are wasted. I admit I would prefer a declamatory "poetic" commentary—done in the right way—to the facetious journalese we get so often; but I'd prefer plain facts, quietly stated once, to either. Simplicity is excellent, but self-conscious simplicity is not so good.

Three Comrades (lately at the Empire) is a high-class weepie, directed by *FRANK BOEZAGE*, whose particular line is the high-class weepie. The question is whether, if you don't like weepies, you should see this for the sake of *MARGARET SULLAVAN*'s almost perfect (I would leave out "almost" if I dared) performance as *Pat*; and I am inclined to think you should. I don't see how the part could possibly have been played better. The political edges of the *REMARQUE* novel have been not so much dulled as completely filed away in the film adaptation; no party is named, the unpleasant people are there to personify the one you dislike. This is not the sort of picture that appeals to me, and there is plenty wrong with it even as it stands (I am not the first to point out that it begins with the line "Major, now that the war is over, may I call you father?"), but it does contain some very good things. *MARGARET SULLAVAN* is the best.

Too much attention has been paid, I think, to the fact that in *Joy of Living* *IRENE DUNNE* gets drunk. Very mildly, very charmingly, and very briefly. There is much more in the picture than this trivial binge. It is not an important work of art, and it is not as good as *The Awful Truth*; but it is more than just another crazy comedy, and it has its very funny moments. *DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS* junior does not seem quite at ease in his part of the rich young cargo-boat-owner who keeps trying to make the hardworking actress follow her madder impulses; but I ask you, who would?

R. M.

"He slid an eye round the corner, prepared to yank it back on an instant's notice, and then left it there with the brow over it lowering in a frown."—*Serial in Daily Paper*.
Just to keep the dust out.

"Inspector — said that the usual red herring of Mr. —'s had been exploded—that there was a flat tyre."

Isle of Man Paper.

Was it the first that ever burst?





AT HOME

AN AMERICAN FANTASY

Leave It Alone

Two Australians have complained that the cricket scoreboards in England (even at Lord's) are not sufficiently informative. In Australia, it seems, you can watch the rise not only of the batsman's runs but of the bowler's average. And whenever the ball is fielded, caught, or (I presume) missed, a light is shown behind the fielder's number.

The two Australians have done a service in bringing this grave question to the bar of public opinion. But let us do nothing hasty or extreme.

I see their point. I have often felt myself that unsatisfied longing to identify and know. And I have noticed that the particular thing I want to know is seldom indicated on the board.

Nevertheless, I am not at all sure that the best board of all is not the good old village board, which says, simply and erroneously—

87
01
9

Let us consider a few *pros* and *cons*.

Fielder's name. *Pro*. Attractive suggestion. The casual cricket-watcher, after much brainwork and many overs, can at last learn to distinguish between two batsmen, both of the same height, and wearing similar caps and black gloves with white trimmings. But he has not the smallest notion which fielder is which, especially in these days when the field is reshuffled as often as the Cabinet. (In my day you were placed at mid-wicket or long-stop at the beginning of the innings, and there you remained to the end.)

It would be nice, then, to know who made that much-applauded save or catch.

But *con*—suppose it is *not* made? He who has just missed a sitter before a multitude is surely suffering enough. Is he as well to be accused and shamed by a brilliantly illuminated

Is he to hear the people mutter in unison, "Ah, yes, that's Vavasour"?

And how much more brutal must such a system be when there occur those scrambles in the slips, when none can say from afar if it was a catch and, if so, which fellow was the culprit. To be absolutely just the score-board should be able to say

MISSED BY 7 BUT 9 IMPEDED HIM

or

NO, YOU FOOLS, IT WAS A BUMP-BALL

But then, who is the scorer to make such big decisions?

Then about the bowler and his average.

Con. It may assist the captain to know which of his bowlers has cost the most runs, though in the old days a captain was able to manage his bowling without having a sort of illuminated *Wisden* to assist him. But, humanly speaking, I say the thing is barbarous. Is it not enough that the rising tide of runs is recorded in three places? Is it really good and necessary that the weary bowler (just taken off) should look up and see this:—

RUNS	OVERS	MAIDENS	LONG-HOPS	WICKETS
207	73	4	302	0

Besides, knowing what I do of my dear but naughty Australians, I will bet that some of them use this kind of scoreboard for betting purposes.

Pro.—NIL.

Then the batsmen.

Con.

No, I am not convinced that we ought even to be told (till he is out) how many each batsman has made. It nourishes the century-cult, which is a bad cult and growing worse. It is quite absurd that it should matter immensely more to make 100 than to make 97, but it does. And this encourages us all to think of cricket in terms of individual performance, though at the same time we are explaining to the young in the good old way that in cricket the individual does not matter, one plays for the side, and so forth. Also it encourages the universal but imbecile concentration on "records."

And for the batsman it is evidently fatal. I suppose there are some austere performers who don't look at the board—or their part of the board. I doubt if there are many. And so at 80 they start scratching about and the game slows down. At 95, in an agony of nerves, they make their first bad stroke and are caught. And, if they do pass the post, at 103 they think, "Oh, well, that's over," lash blithely across a yorker and are very properly bowled.

Pro.

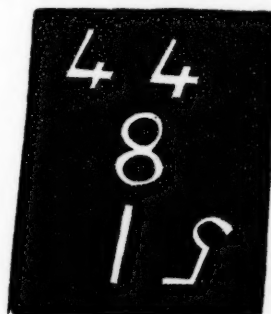
The system ministers to (a) public curiosity and (b) personal pride.

No, if we are to have more information on the score-board, most of it should not be cricket information. It should cover some of those personal and social topics which are so much discussed at cricket matches—especially at the annual contests between the academies of learning. Then some of us could watch the cricket in peace. Thus:—

BATSMAN	
NUMBER	3
SCHOOL	Rugton
FATHER'S NAME	Same
REMARKS	One of the Worcester-shire lot. Snib's brother
CLUBS	National Sporting, Athenæum and Crabb's
PROFESSION	Stockbroker
HOBBIES	Mind your own business
POLITICS	All Right
FIANCÉE	The larger of the Beetle Twins
INCOME	Precarious

BOWLER	
NUMBER	9
FATHER'S NAME	Lord Bottle. Yes, you remember, he was George Anchovy. Then his brother died and he married a widow. This is <i>her</i> boy.
DESCRIPTION	Fast. Turns from the off. Red hair.
LENGTH OF RUN	25 yards
REMARKS	Too long
PROFESSION	Reading for Bar
POLITICS	A touch to the Left, but nothing to worry about
MARRIED OR ENGAGED	No
HOBBIES	Quite all right
PROSPECTS	£3000 a year when the old man goes
SCANDALS	No. It was his cousin in the Casserole case

No. Perhaps after all the best board is the good old village board, which says, quite simply:—



A. P. H.

William Buys the Ring



JOYCE DENNYS

DEAR GEORGE,—Am glad to hear you are glad to hear I have got engaged. You say you hope I will come round soon, I suppose you mean will I call because if not it is the sort of double entente I do not approve of.

I have taken another step or been took one but not without a little how do you do. It happened like this. Last Sunday in the recreation ground I said Lucy why wave your hand about? there is not someone you are waving to because when you do you say oohoo as well so tell me. I was showing off the engagement ring you havent bought me she said. Let me know when you want me to laugh and I will try to I said. Do not cut up rough she said, a friend of mine who is plainer than a pikestaff got engaged to a fellow who had not two pennies to rub together and he gave her a ring like a searchlight.

Yes I said, he gave it her but you were talking about buying one. Do you suggest he bought it without paying? she said, because if so. Perish the thought I said, no doubt it was a hareloom or bought on the pay so much down and too much up principle, my Fathers married life was made little short of hell of by keeping up with the Joneses, his weight fell to eighteen stone through it. I do not catch on she said, you are thin and her name is Brown and then she turned the tap full on.

Use my clean one I said, no member of the plumbing profession is going to stand by and see his girls nose put out of joint, I wish the world was one big burst pipe so I could mend it and lay it at your feet as a token. There is your old poetic touch bobbing up again she said, but I would rather have a ring thank you all the same, we can choose one to-morrow, here is your hanky, it is quite nice now isnt it?

Next evening we went to a shop where she said she knew the man who did the serving while the man who owned it was having late tea in the Crown. Good evening Sir this man said, oh hullo Lucy it is nice to see you again, quite like old times, it is nice to see you again. This is where we came in Lucy I said, we dont want this ditto repeato business, I came to buy an engagement ring if you will get down to brass tacks. Are you engaged to him Lucy? he said. Do you mean I do not suit her or she me or both I said, because if so you will come to in a ward or something much smaller. No no he said, my asking had no backlash ah women women women women. Yes I said, there are a lot of them but that is not either here or there. I was only thinking he said. It is not a pretty sight believe me I said.

This is a bute of a ring he said, and only such and such. I do not wish to squander myself I said, it being intended to be a short engagement. What about a second hand one? Lucy said. Lucy Lucy Lucy I said, what ever next indeed. Kings and Americans buy second hand ones she said, so why not us? Okay if Kings do I said but what Americans do is no criterium, look at the films.

He took out a ring and said this was brought me to sell by a young lady who things did not pan out as expected for, it only had one owner and a small mileage as us motorists say. Me being a cyclist I said, your remarks are water on a ducks back, is it real gold? Hand rolled he said, the diamond will come up like new with a damp cloth. This is me to a tea Lucy said. Yes he said, you look a proper treat. My dear Sir I said, pipe down do, here is your money, if some people kept themselves to himself a better time would be had by all, come Lucy.



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"GOOD, SIR? WHY, IT'S CHANGED MY 'OLE OUTLOOK ON LIFE."

At her house her Father said being as we are one step nearer the nuptials I drink to your happiness now and your married life to be, I would offer you some but I have drank most of it waiting for you, bung ho best respects. Returned with thanks I said. Then her Mother said the thought of my girly going fair tears me up, I will have to come and stay with you when you are settled down. I am afraid I said, it will take us the best part of some time to settle down but will send you a P.C. if and when convenient.

So Lucy has got the ring back her Mother said. Back? I said, as a impending son in law to be I demand to know what goings on have been going on if any. Mother Mother Lucy said, why will you chip in, now I shall have to tell the truth which is a bit tough when I have not had time to think it over. I am waiting I said, fierce. This man in the shop we got the ring from was engaged to me once she said, I thought it was love but it was only his car sweep me off my feet pro tem and when he took to playing Tiger Rag on the saxophone in our dining room I knew it was the beginning of the end, which it soon was. He wouldn't take

the ring back because he said it would choke him so when you said you would buy one it was a chance of killing two birds with one stone. I think he is taking it okay her Mother said, give the boy a beer. Well I said, I did not know Lucy had been pre engaged to a snake in the grass, I think for a girl Loves old sweet song should be left so and not made a male voice choir of.

Anyhow her Father said, things are now fate accomplee. Pardong? I said. French proverb he said, meaning something was to be and now it has gone and been it. I suppose so I said.

Then her Mother told me about someone like it might be Lucy who was engaged to someone like it might be me and before you could say so much as knife she was a unprovided for widow. Still she said, let us hope history will not repeat itself for once, things not being what they were. That is a nice thought I said, I will say good bye all before emotion masters me, good bye all.

Lucy came into the hall and said ooh I forgot to say I shall call to morrow for the ring money because he was selling it for me and we can use it to furnish with. Money for our home

from a knit whit like that I said, I do not think. I tell you what she said, we will use it to buy mats and rugs with and then when you wipe your boots you can think of him and wipe harder. Lucy I said, to day has been a revelation to me but I still love you, if I was a Shakespeare I would do a sonnet about it but being a practical man I will only say oh revoor.

Well George it only goes to show we live and learn but do we live long enough? I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

The Bright Side

"The lake at Danson Park has been remarkably immune from drowning accidents. There have been a number of fatalities, but very few accidents."—*Local Paper*.

"The Deputy Lord Mayor (Ald. J. P. Dymond) said they would have to be prepared for suggestions of inconsistency from the public because of this. But because certain films were shown in the city on Sunday for religious purposes that did not in any way cut the grass from under their feet."

Western Morning News.

Surely it's time they found something that does.



"HE SEZ 'THIS IS AN OPPORTOONITY TO INSPECT THE WICKET—BUT YOU DOAN HAVE TER.'"

If Only I Had the Time

My pictures, I'm told, are exceedingly clever,
 Yet somehow my painting has never got on,
 But the critics agree that my smallest endeavour
 Combines the best features of SICKERT and JOHN.
 But you know how it is when the telephone rings
 And you're plastered with kind invitations—
 There are friends in the country and parties and things,
 And one *must* be polite to relations . . .
 But I'd just like to say that I'd be an R.A.
If only I had the time.

My novels and essays are stylish and witty,
 Yet somehow I cannot get rid of the stuff,
 And DESMOND MCCARTHY has said: "What a pity!
 It's clear that of talent you've more than enough."
 But you know how it is when you sit down to write . . .
 There's a picture which ought to be altered;
 Then friends come to tea and remain half the night—
 Can you wonder my writing has faltered?
 But I'd turn out a plot that would beat the whole lot
If only I had the time.

My golf is considered so brilliant in patches
 That COTTON has written to ask me for tips,
 Yet somehow I've managed to lose all my matches
 Through topping my drives and misjudging my chips.
 But you know how it is when you set out to play
 With your mind on your painting and writing . . .
 And well-meaning friends all invite you to stay . . .
 And tennis is far more exciting.
 But when all's said and done I would soon be Plus One
If only I had the time.

I'm told I've a flair for acquiring big money
 And ought to be running a business concern,
 But (to use the word wrongly) it seems rather funny
 That three pounds a week is the most I can earn.
 But you know how it is when you're tied to a job
 Which you know isn't really your calling.
 You sit there and envy old Thingummybob,
 And the outlook is simply appalling.
 But it's perfectly clear I'd make thousands a year
If only I had the time.



THE DAWN OF A DOUBT

Master Adolf. "It tasted lovely—but I'm beginning to wonder whether it's not going to disagree with me!"

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, July 4th.—Commons: Debates on British Credits for Turkey, and the Milk Bill.

Tuesday, July 5th.—Lords: Still-births (Scotland) and British Museum Bills given Second Reading. Committee stage of Hire Purchase Bill concluded.

Commons: Fire Brigade Bill given Third Reading.

Wednesday, July 6th.—Lords: Debate on question of Ministers speaking in either House.

Commons: Lords' Amendments to Coal Bill considered.

Monday, July 4th.—Mr. BUTLER was severely heckled this afternoon on the question of the Portuguese frontier, but stuck to his guns, or rather to the conviction that Portugal was doing that and not passing them on to General FRANCO. The Opposition, including Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, were annoyed because, they said, the Government had made representations to France about the desirability of closing their frontier to the traffic in arms, but not to Portugal; but Mr. BUTLER was quite sure that Portugal was remembering her manners.

The House was treated to an unusual spectacle when Capt. RAMSAY for the second time presented his Bill to prevent aliens fouling the English air with blasphemy. The explanation was simple enough—that last week at the critical moment he had forgotten the names of his backers.

Sir JOHN SIMON got a good reception for the Government's Bill to advance to Turkey up to £6,000,000, with which contracts will be placed in this country for munitions. He explained that these supplies would not interfere in any way with production for our own needs, and that although the internal finance of

Turkey had been administered with notable success, externally she had found herself cramped since the 1931 depression; and he insisted that this agreement should not be regarded as



THE NEST-EGG

SIR JOHN SIMON GIVES A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT TO TURKEY.

more than part of "a general policy to promote international economic relations."

The whole House welcomed friendship with a country which was described as an honest trader and a useful ally in the Near East, and even the Labour Party, doubtful of the ethics of an armaments loan, salved its conscience with the thought that Turkey was a loyal member of the League, and abstained from voting against the Bill.

Tuesday, July 5th.—The late Lord ROTHSCHILD left his unique zoological collection to the British Museum, and to-day the Lords gratefully gave a Second Reading to a Bill authorising the acceptance of the bequest. The cost of running Lord ROTHSCHILD's museum at Tring as an annexe to the British Museum will be about £5,000 a year, but the collection and library are of such scientific importance that this will be very well spent.

When Mr. HORE-BELISHA was pressed by Mr. EDE during Questions to give the names of those present at the meeting of the Army Council which decided to set up the Court of Inquiry into the leakage of secrets, he refused, saying that he accepted full responsibility for what had happened and that he did not wish to commit a breach of custom by mentioning individual members of the Council by name. Mr. SPEAKER admitted he had never known such a question to be put before, but he said he saw nothing irregular in asking if members of the Government had been present at the Council.

Mr. FOOT, staunch champion of democracy, taunted the Government with the six years which have passed since the report of the Committee on Ministers' Powers recommended that a small Standing Committee should be set up in each House at the beginning of each Session to consider every Bill which gave any law-making power to a Minister. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR was sarcastic about the tardy working of the Government's mind, but Mr. CHAMBERLAIN would go no further than the assurance that the views of the Committee were remembered as regards current legislation.

If General FRANCO had happened to be shrimping a few miles round the corner from Gibraltar the other day and had observed a ruddy object purposefully cleaving the Mediterranean, a Marxist submarine intent to bump him off would have been his obvious conclusion. But he would have been wrong; it was our red-headed Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty, Mr. SHAKESPEARE, who was visiting the Nyon patrols and had strayed into FRANCO territory for a quiet swim. Mr. PALING's attempt to make this adventure sound very sinister collapsed when Mr. CHAMBERLAIN explained how innocent it had really been.

A good deal of sympathy will be felt for Mr. BEN SMITH's complaint that two questions of his, carrying numbers in the sixties, had not been reached when the hour for Question-time had finished and had been on the Order Paper for a week, and also for Mr. JAMES GRIFFITHS' suggestion that instead of finishing at 3.45 P.M. Questions should go on until four o'clock. When one considers the unnecessary length (two columns in



Lord STRABOLGI. "The Labour Party's policy towards the House of Lords can be summed up in one word—Abolition."



Mr. BEN SMITH. "GAD, THEY DON'T HALF HUSTLE! HERE AM I WAITING A WEEK WITHOUT GETTING ANY ATTENTION!"



"WHY, SIGURD, YOU NEARLY WENT OFF WITHOUT YOUR 'NEVERSYKKE.'"

the local paper is the minimum, some declare) of many Members' speeches in debate, a further quarter-of-an-hour for potted information should not be hard to find. Too many supplementary questions was Mr. SPEAKER's diagnosis of the trouble, but when Sir LAMBERT WARD accused the Opposition of being responsible for most of these, Mr. ATTLEE retorted that the cure was for Ministers to answer questions.

The debate on the Fire Brigades Bill was marked by the contumacious behaviour of Mr. MOREING, a Conservative, who declared that he was going to vote against a clause as a protest against being dragooned by the HOME SECRETARY and the Whips, and by an interesting discussion on the suggestion that insurance companies, who chiefly benefited from it, should be made to contribute towards the cost of fire-fighting. Sir SAMUEL HOARE's opinion was that it was no more reasonable than that accident offices should be made to contribute towards the police or life offices towards the cost of sanitation.

Wednesday, July 6th.—In putting forward the suggestion that Cabinet Ministers should be allowed to address either House, Lord MANSFIELD pointed

out that it was becoming increasingly difficult for a Peer to hold high office, and that if the most suitable candidate for the Premiership happened to be in the Lords his chances of selection would be small. Lord STRABOLGI supported him, though foreseeing com-

plications if there should be women Ministers, but on the whole the feeling of the House was that a dual stage would impose a physical strain on Ministers which would seriously interfere with their work. This was the view of Lord HALIFAX, who said that the idea was inimical to the historical evolution of the Constitution. In other words, it was better to keep the two Houses quite separate.

At Question-time Mr. CHAMBERLAIN told the Commons that, as the Non-Intervention Committee had now accepted the British plan, and the British, French, German and Italian Governments had each put up £12,500 for current expenses, the plan was being sent immediately to both sides in Spain. Its text would be available to Members next Monday.

The debate on the Lords' amendments to the Coal Bill found the Opposition rampacious about what they regarded as a barefaced attempt to preserve vested interest. Mr. STANLEY referred to the Government defeats in the Lords as a series of mischances, and firmly rejected the amendment postponing the date at which coal-property passed to the Commission. The House agreed with him.



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO

This face is
A Socialist ace's.
It's
Mr. PRITT'S.

Letters to an Inspector of Taxes

"The Firs,"

Little Wobbley.

SIR,—I wonder if you would help me clear up a little point before I fill in your nice form? I live here with my two sisters and we have about £400 a year from various stocks in our joint names, which Selina says is really hers owing to our father's dying wish, although if we had gone to Court, which we did not, owing to a dislike of washing dirty linen in public, *non compos mentis* would have been the verdict. So some years ago we decided that Selina should have £200 and Agatha and the undersigned £100 each, but that all profits from the eggs and milk should go to the undersigned, and the payments of paying guest, if any, to Agatha, the household bills to be split between us. Now Selina has married Agatha's paying guest, who has not paid for six months and now says, being one of the family, doesn't intend to. The death of the cow last June has also changed the situation, so perhaps you will tell us how to fill in the forms?

EUNICE PURDY.

"The Strawberries,"

Little Wobbley.

SIR,—Before filling in the form which you have so kindly sent me I should like to know whether I can include my wife's Uncle Egbert as a dependent relative. If he does not depend on me then I should like to know who else he depends on. He is supposed to make a living selling cars, but as he always sells them for less than he buys them for this does not yield very much. He is more expensive than most dependent relatives, and though I do not make him any definite allowance, bills are constantly flowing in which I have to pay. He does not actually live with us, but he came for a short week-end in May, 1933, and has not gone yet, so it amounts to the same thing.

L. CONKLESHILL.

"Bombay Cottage,"

Little Wobbley.

SIR,—I enclose the form duly filled up. You will notice that I have deducted £10 under "Expenses" for liquid refreshment. This was consumed while filling up the form, and without it I should certainly have gone mad, so I hope you will allow it, as if I had gone mad H.M. Government would have had no tax from me at all next year owing to the expense of private asylums.

HORATIO HOGG, Col.

Golden Towers,

Little Wobbley.

SIR,—I have an income of approximately £50,000 a year, but for the past few years have managed to evade payment of tax owing to the skill of my accountants in arranging settlements on various members of my family, investing money abroad, etc. The accountants' bills have been very heavy, however, and I don't see why I should not get the necessary information straight from the horse's mouth. So I would be obliged if you would send me by return of post a short list of the best methods of tax evasion. Naturally

I do not wish to have anything to do with illegality in any shape or form.

G. TOPPER-PINSTRIFE.

"The Blowlamp,"

Little Wobbley.

SIR,—I notice in the National Accounts printed on the back of my last year's assessment an amount of £13,626,000 for Police. As I am a safe-breaker by profession, I think it hardly fair that I should be expected to contribute to this, and will be glad to know if it will be in order for me to make the necessary deduction.

WILLIAM SYKES.



"I WAS TRYING TO GO NATIVE, BUT THE NATIVES CHUCKED ME OUT."

At the Play

"NO SKY SO BLUE" (SAVOY)

No Sky so Blue is announced as a play with music, by HENRY C. JAMES, "based on an idea by ARCHIE MENZIES," and the idea was presumably to make fun of Geneva—which is certainly an idea, although not perhaps strikingly original—and to mix up a Peace Conference with a love-story. Obviously everything is going to turn on the treatment. Presumably Mr. JAMES is an American with that very detached view of European foreign affairs which is his countrymen's birthright, for he approaches the task of parody without making any sort of acquaintance with his victim. It is not enough to put on the stage eight or ten actors dressed up as the representatives of foreign nations. The essence of what has to be parodied at Geneva is a bureaucratic formalism, a bustle of secretaries and in general an elaboration of procedure. Even for a light musical evening some attempt should be made to create illusion, but with the British President of the Council and two leading members wandering in and out of each others' rooms, it is impossible to get the impression, however often they may talk about their conference, that they are the accredited and important people which the dramatist wants us to think them.

It is a pity that the setting is so unreal, and a further pity that the private matrimonial tangle seems to interest the chief characters in it so very little. *Adèle* (Miss LEA SEIDL) is married to the tall grim *Rachinoff* (Mr. ALAN NAPIER). Mr. NAPIER'S *Rachinoff* brings vigour and concentration on to the stage, but he is interested only in politics. He has married *Adèle* in the morning—we do not quite see why—and he has lost her before nightfall, and within a week he will barely recall her name.

Before this *Adèle* has been married to *Count Paul Ravel* (Mr. STEVE GERAY), but they had already

parted. Mr. STEVE GERAY is the most appealing of comedy actors. It is always a treat to find him in the cast and to see him on the stage, but to get the most out of his gifts he ought to be given parts in which he really gets into

from love-affair to love-affair, finding every woman he meets irresistible, and although when he meets his wife again he is at once sorry they parted, he is not lonely and is indeed anxious to avoid marrying the *Countess Petkoff*, who is proposing to add him to her own growing list of husbands and ex-husbands.

The *Countess Petkoff* (Miss GERTRUDE NIESEN) gives the piece a life and punch which is immensely valuable to it. With a touch of the *gamine* and a habit of incessant wise-cracking, she goes straight for what she wants; and what she wants is simple enough, for she is a woman of one idea, though sometimes, when she is singing, she calls it "romance" and at other times she calls it "love." She sings, and her voice commands surprising volume. She is a character and things are never dull while she is about. Many of her retorts have a devastating aptness, and even when they have not and are simply what Shakespearean commentators term "play upon words," she carries them off with an easy insouciance.

There she is more fortunate than some of the rest of the cast. They are all given too many of these forced pseudo-epigrammatic pieces of repartee to deliver as best they can, and often it is only too plain they are feeling the effort and know that a reasonably mature audience is not going to find puns amusing. Mr. EDMON RYAN has a good small part as *Teddy K. Wing*, the American correspondent who knows that the good newspaperman will never stop to knock at a door, and that he will lose his photograph if he gives people time to disentangle themselves from embraces.

There is some music in this piece, and it would have been much improved with a great deal more. All the minor characters, the hotel managers and lawyers, are produced as character parts and are like the people in cartoons, and their little prancings should have been supported by the orchestra, and the sort of things they said would have been much more acceptable in the verses of songs. It is, in short, a piece that has



THE ZEALOT

Boris Rachinoff Mr. ALAN NAPIER
Sir Charles Berkeley Mr. CYRIL RAYMOND

serious difficulties, is really worried and makes ambitious but disastrous attempts, on his own initiative, to bend the circumstances to his will. Then he is immensely diverting. In this play he is a vague stage diplomat who passes



COURTESY

Adèle Miss LEA SEIDL
Countess Petkoff Miss GERTRUDE NIESEN
Count Paul Ravel Mr. STEVE GERAY

the makings of a light comic opera but that does not do at all as a comedy very lightly garnished with music.

Miss LEA SEIDL did what she could as a sophisticated woman of the world to pretend that her various preposterous lovers were real people, but they were too much for her, and a general habit of shouting and declaiming was perhaps intended to pump life and spirit into the show. D.W.

"WHITE SECRETS" (GARRICK)

The suggestion has been made that this play, which is about a polar expedition, is another *Journey's End*. I cannot see it. There are certain obvious similarities, in a group of men mewed up in circumstances of discomfort and danger, in an absence of women, and in a Cockney servant whose humour is at times the only preservative of sanity; but whereas in *Journey's End* the men's situation was utterly beyond their control and never of their choosing, what happens here is the penalty of risks well-known to each member of the party before he volunteered to join it; and that seems to me to make a great difference to the force of the drama.

Journey's End was so immensely effective (to my mind it is still the best of all the War plays) because it showed in simple terms the mental strain which millions of men were suddenly obliged to face. It made you not only sorry but angry; this play is good enough to make you sorry for its characters but it cannot make you angry, for clearly explorers accept the risks of their job with their eyes open. There is no compulsion to go to the Pole. Presumably those who make the attempt do so because it satisfies something in their nature.

I think this difference explains a slowness here which was never noticeable in *Journey's End*. The play is well-written (it is by Mr. R. W. EARP, in collaboration with Mr. E. P. CAWSON), almost perfectly cast, and acted with great sincerity. It tells its story quietly, without purple patches of heroics, and gives a compelling picture of the strangely domestic life of a small community of men stranded in a wilderness; yet there were times, particularly in the Second Act, when one's interest flagged.

The story begins with a

brief Prologue inside the main room of the hut at the base camp where the expedition is spending the winter. *Stornoway* (Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG), a shaggy bear of a man, is the leader, firm with his men but loved by them and



A POLAR JEEVES

Walker . . . Mr. ALEXANDER FIELD

tireless for their success. His two assistants are *Barton* (Mr. DAVID HAWTHORNE), a Prussian type, physically splendid, and *Otterleigh* (Mr. COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON), the chief scientist, a keen, likeable young man. The others are the Scottish doctor, *Mac-*

Donald (Mr. JOHN LAURIE), *Jackson* (Mr. BARRIE LIVESSEY), the cameraman, a new-fledged scientist named *Ecroyd* (Mr. PETER OSBORN), and *Walker* (Mr. ALEXANDER FIELD), the Cockney nurse, cook-general, company-sergeant-major, kennelman and entertainer.

The expedition is in training for a big Polar survey which is to take place the year after, and to lead this it is known that *Stornoway* will choose either *Barton* or *Otterleigh*. As a preliminary canter he sends them, with *Ecroyd* as third man, for a much shorter trip with a fairly easy itinerary. Before they start out we discover that *Barton* is in love with *Otterleigh's* wife, and makes no bones about his intention of breaking up his home on their return; but for the sake of the expedition the two men agree to forget about that for the moment.

In Act One, the only scene not in the hut, the party has come to grief on its way back, fifty miles from the base camp. *Barton*, a slave-driver out for records, has walked the other two lame, and his contempt for sun-glasses has cost him his reason. While he has been trying to thrash *Ecroyd* the dogs have got away. *Ecroyd* falls off a rock and hurts himself badly. For his sake *Otterleigh* insists on camping for the night. They have plenty of food, but *Barton*, crazy and convinced that a blizzard is coming up, pours paraffin over their supplies and starts back by himself. *Otterleigh* races after him and shoots him, knowing that without food *Ecroyd* will die; but even food doesn't save *Ecroyd*, and *Otterleigh* crawls back to the base camp alone. He gives

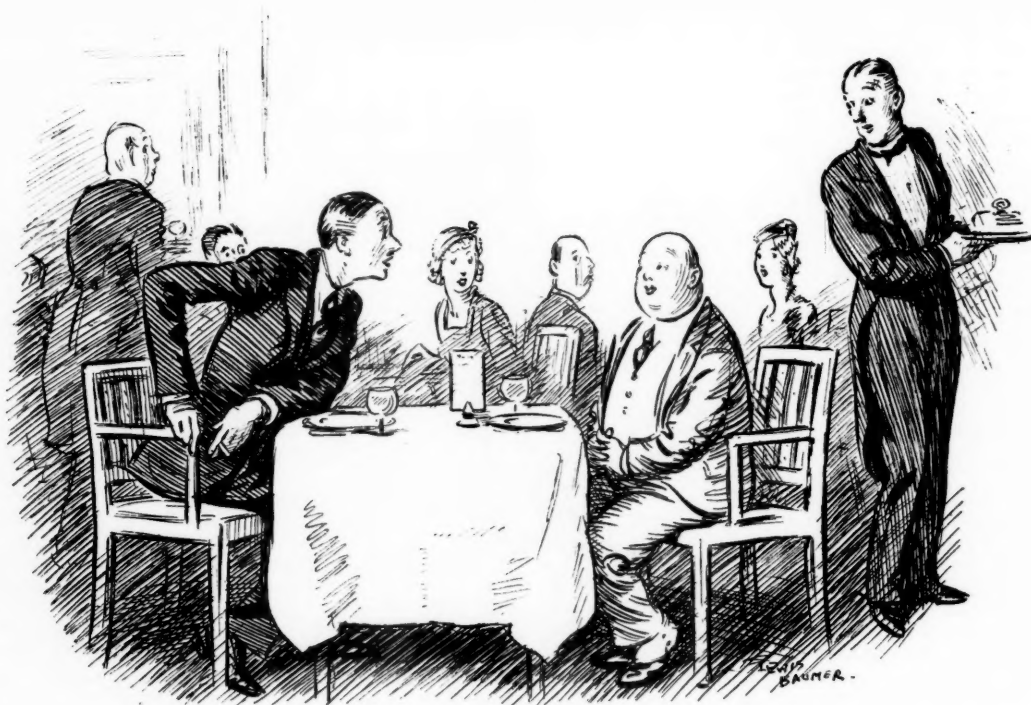
Stornoway an honest report. In the meantime a journalist named *Harding* (Mr. D. A. CLARKE-SMITH), whose life *Barton* had saved during the War, has joined the expedition; and ferreting out the truth, he forces an inquiry and offers *Otterleigh* the alternatives (he is an extraordinarily revengeful person, I must say) of a scandal in England or death in the blizzard outside. *Otterleigh* chooses the latter, and soon after he has left the hut a note is discovered, left by *Ecroyd* in the instrument-case, which completely vindicates him.

The story hangs together well, and, with the reservations I have mentioned, it makes a telling play. The acting honours are too evenly distributed to call for special bouquets. ERIC.



THE MURDER THAT WON'T OUT

Otterleigh Mr. COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON
Stornoway Mr. ARTHUR YOUNG
Harding Mr. D. A. CLARKE-SMITH



"YOU SEE, I HAPPEN TO BE A NATIVE OF WHITSTABLE."

Panic

It would be an insult to the intelligence of my readers to suppose that they were unaware of the history of the panic of 1825. It is perhaps casting some aspersion on their general learning to offer any explanation of the nature of the Committee of 1832; but since we have to begin somewhere we may be excused for offering the elementary information that the Committee of 1832 was a Secret Committee appointed by the House of Commons "to inquire into the expediency of renewing the Charter of the Bank of England, and into the system on which Banks of issue in England and Wales are conducted." It published a full report (hence the term "secret") within a year of its appointment; and by 1833 one THOMAS JOPLING had published that grand volume on which his fame chiefly rests. I refer of course to the "Digest of The Evidence on The Bank Charter taken before The Committee of 1832,

arranged with the tables under proper heads; to which are prefixed *Strictures and Illustrative Remarks*."

It is really in the *Strictures and Illustrative Remarks* that the meat of the egg is contained. The Table of Contents which Mr. JOPLING drew up will give the intelligent but restless reader a fair idea of the general trend of this section. The author might well have been proud of his Table, for it shows a nice sense of effect, a capacity for expressing much in a few words, and a captivating prose style. It begins:—

"The Anxiety of the Public for Information respecting the Currency . . . pages 1 to 5"—and passes from the realm of *Illustrative Remarks* to that of *Strictures* with: "The Instructions of the House of Commons to the Committee, and the defective Manner in which they were acted upon."

While the Committee are still, as it were, cowering beneath this no doubt well-merited rebuke, JOPLING transfers his *Strictures* to the Bank of England. Beginning mildly with "Erroneous Conduct of the Bank in their Trans-

actions with the Government," his censure takes on a sterner note in "Erroneous Conduct of the Bank in Political Panics, etc.," and blares out like a trumpet in the grand "Erroneous Conduct of the Bank in Anticipation of a Bad Harvest." After mentioning, more in sorrow than in anger, the Erroneous Conduct of the Bank on the resumption of Cash Payments and the Erroneous Conduct of the Bank in respect to their Branches, the indignant JOPLING strikes again at the wretched Committee ("Error of the Committee in refusing Information on the Subject referred to them"), and finally crushes them to the dust in that memorable chapter entitled "Error of the Committee further illustrated by a Reference to Mr. SCROPE's Essay, written for *The Quarterly*, and Mr. McCULLOCH's article in *The Edinburgh Review*, on the subject of the Bank Charter." By now thoroughly worked up, he takes a wipe at the hapless McCULLOCH with "Want of Knowledge of General Principles exhibited in the Article in *The Edinburgh Review*," and, after glaring round

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to see if anyone else is visible above ground, reluctantly brings his Observations, etc., to a close and goes on to digest the Report of the Committee.

This makes, if possible, even finer reading, though there is a tendency to repetition. The Committee, appointed to inquire into the expediency of renewing the Charter of the Bank of England, went straight to the fountain-head and asked the Governor of the Bank of England whether, in his opinion, it was expedient that the Charter should be renewed. He said he thought it should. This was on Tuesday, May 29th. On Wednesday the Committee seem to have taken a rest; but on Thursday the 31st they were at it again, demanding of HORSLEY PALMER, Esq., (Governor of the Bank of England) whether the Charter ought to be renewed or not. Yes, said Mr. PALMER, it ought, and spent some time explaining how a bank worked. The Committee took a long week-end off to reflect on what they had heard; then on the Tuesday they got down to it once more and spent the whole day soliciting the opinion of the Governor of the Bank of England on the expediency or otherwise of renewing the Bank's Charter. He said—but, to make a long story short, by the 18th of June the Committee were convinced that in Mr. PALMER's opinion the Charter ought to be renewed.

I imagine there must have been some pushing young man on the Committee (perhaps it was SIR ROBERT PEEL—he was on it) who at this stage ventured the suggestion that the evidence of the Governor of the Bank might not be altogether free from prejudice, and that it *might* be a good idea to ask someone else besides. Whatever the cause, on the 19th of June we find the Committee launching out on a new tack and interrogating as their next witness one WILLIAM WARD, Esq. Mr. WARD was well qualified to speak with authority on the subject of the Charter, for he was himself a Director of the Bank. He said, Yes, the Charter ought to be renewed. He was questioned again on the 21st, when his opinion remained unchanged. He also explained how a bank worked, and described amongst other things the course of action pursued by the Bank in anticipation of a bad harvest. After he had given evidence, one of the Committee (again I suspect SIR ROBERT) asked him how the Bank knew when there was going to be a bad harvest. He replied that they judged from a variety of indications. Pressed for details, he said that they obtained the best information they could. The Committee then adjourned and took a day off.

There were twenty-four Directors of the Bank of England, but the Committee gave up after the fourth. By that time the dullest Committeeman had perceived that the unanimity of opinion shown by the Directors on this subject was more than could be explained by mere coincidence. Their evidence, as given before the Committee, is rich in testimony to the excellence of the Bank of England, and one of them added a touching little tribute to the integrity of the Directors.

The Committee were guilty of a single slight lapse of taste. They called upon one JEREMIAH HARMAN, who had been a Director once but had now retired, to give evidence; and though for the most part his recollection of lines learnt in his Director days carried him through, there were one or two slips and

the performance as a whole was not up to Director standard. "During thirty years of experience," he said, "when the interests of the proprietors clashed with the interests of the public, the Directors preferred the latter and sacrificed the former, and this as a matter of duty, especially since the parliamentary inquiries."

With this artless little testimonial we must take our leave of JOPLING's masterpiece. So far as I have been able to discover, there has never been a repetition of the panic of 1825 (the nature of which it would be superfluous to dilate upon); but in what proportion the credit for this satisfactory circumstance should be divided between Mr. JOPLING, the Committee of 1832 and the advent of the safety bicycle is not for me to decide.



"I KNOW, MY DEAR, BUT I'M NOT AT ALL SURE THAT THEY'LL LET ME."

International Courtesies

"THE memory of Père Junot," said M. le Curé sadly, "grows more agile every day. It is a dreadful thing to be a wicked old man who says he can remember Queen Victoria visiting France at various dates from 1838 to 1914. Where, I ask myself, will Père Junot go when he dies?"

"He will go to Hollywood if he is not careful," I said. "They will make him an historical adviser and he will produce a film of Napoleon, featuring the fall of Sebastopol and the massacre of Cawnpore. To what do we owe these remarkable memories?"

"Partly to the royal visit," replied M. le Curé with a sigh. "Père Junot, deep down in his black heart, feels indescribable emotions stirring him to wilder and wilder untruths. But also he is jealous of the triumph of Agnès Dupont, who has just returned from London and loses no opportunity of instructing the village in English politics. Tell me—was there not once a rebellion of the Highlanders?"

"There was," I said. "But Père Junot cannot remember that."

M. le Curé shook his head. "I doubt it," he said. "If Père Junot should hear of it he will instantly remember meeting the Prince Charlot at the Gare du Nord. However, Agnès has returned with stranger news than even Père Junot could invent. She reports that your Highlands are seething with disloyalty and that a recrudescence of the rebellion may be expected shortly."

"Indeed," I said. "Whence does this surprising information emanate?"

"From London," replied M. le Curé. "Agnès has become acquainted, during her last tour of duty with Chose Frères, with a London Highlander who is intensely disloyal. He holds that the real descendant of the Stewart kings is some foreign prince, and to him he drinks toasts—though, as Agnès admits, not copiously. He also sings songs of rebellion. One of these, says Agnès, commences '*Charlot est mon chéri*.' Tell me—are these disaffected subjects of your King numerous?"

"Calm yourself," I replied. "These banditti, who whet the bright steel and quaff quichs of usquebaugh in the

intervals of their other occupations, are not so numerous as you think. Fifty per cent. of the insurrection is centred in London. The other man, I believe, used to live at Oxford."

"But the song?" persisted M. le Curé. "Agnès says that she has heard the London children singing it. Is it, like the Marseillaise, a signal of revolt?"

"Not at all," I said. "That song was once a hundred-per-cent. sure fire smash song hit."

"Hein?" said M. le Curé.

"I mean it was a popular song," I explained. "And in England we sing all manner of disloyal songs because the tunes are to our liking. The throne does not rock."

"Ah!" said M. le Curé. "Precisely as you used to charge the Boche while intimating in song your unalterable desire to journey far over the sea where the Boche could not follow. But Agnès's other news is even more remarkable. Because your Queen is Scottish, the Scots consider that Scotland's conquest of England is now complete. She spent a week-end at Edinburgh, and she reports that the people of Scotland are in a state of



"OR, CONSTABLE, HAVE YOU SEEN MY LITTLE GIRL DACHSHUND ANYWHERE?"

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"WHY DON'T YOU DO WHAT I TELL YOU, ELIZABETH, WHEN I TELL YOU NOT TO DO THINGS?"

savage exultation on that point. Is not that an over-statement?"

"The Scots are not given to over-statements," I said. "I knew a Scottish sergeant who, after watching a bombardment for two days, gave it as his considered opinion that someone would be hurt if it continued. If a man like that were to say—as he undoubtedly would—that England lay at the feet of a Scottish Queen it would not be a reckless exaggeration."

"And what would the English say?" inquired M. le Curé. "Did not your Shakespeare declare that England never would lie at the proud foot of a conqueror?"

"Shakespeare's matrimonial experiences were unfortunate," I replied.

"He married an English wife. What was the result? Lady Macbeth. If he had had the felicity to marry a Scots-woman, Lady Macbeth would have been a particularly winning character with a singular charm of manner. Instead of that elod Macbeth, she would have married the King of England and the English would have surrendered unconditionally."

M. le Curé rubbed his chin dubiously. "I fear I cannot explain all that to Agnès," he said. "She has a mundane mind. In Edinburgh, for instance, instead of feeling a glow of romance at her surroundings, she fixed her attention on the trousers of the clergy, which she said were abominable. But shall I inform her, on your authority,

that the English throne is safe and that the Scots have no intention of pressing their triumph too far?"

"You may safely venture on that statement," I replied. "You may also instruct the villagers that they may cry '*Vive l'Ecosse!*' in the hearing of an Englishman without arousing bitter feelings in the latter's breast."

M. le Curé smiled a curious smile. "As a matter of fact," he said shyly, "I intend to go to Paris myself on the great day, and I wish to consult you as an expert. Shall I embarrass the English if I cry '*Vive la Reine écossaise!*'?"

"Shout it as loud as you can," I said. "We've all been shouting it for years." W. G.



"ARE YOU THE LADY WHO'S ADVERTISING FOR A
COOK-GENERAL?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Prince's Irishman

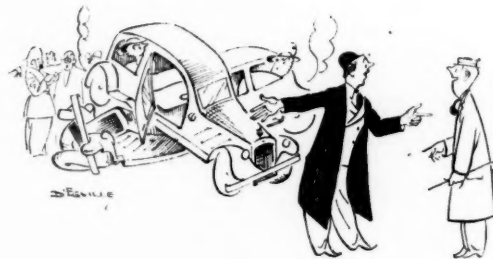
ONE wonders how ANDREW LANG and the rest, combing the MSS of the '45 as finely as they did, came to miss the memoirs of JOHN WILLIAM O'SULLIVAN, Adjutant-General to CHARLES EDWARD's army. O'SULLIVAN's naïve yet extraordinarily vivid narrative has lain practically perdu among the Stuart papers at Windsor until its present masterly editing by Miss HENRIETTA and the late Mr. ALISTAIR TAYLER—in whose enchanting notes liberal use has been made of another new chronicle, JOHN MACDONALD's, from the same source. Four Irishmen—to two Scots—landed at Moidart. Here you have the pick of the former, "a gentleman... capable of... detail and drudgery," the exasperated annalist of the *tracasseries* of a motley command. It is O'SULLIVAN who urges at Manchester that all is lost; who tries and fails to keep the retreat in touch with the sea and continental supplies; to maintain a desperate army "without meal or money" before Culloden. He subsequently cures CHARLES's dysentery with "traicle," and is dismissed, just before "Miss FLORY MACDONEL" takes over, to find his way back to France *via* Bergen and Blankenburg. The title of this delightful book, *1745 and After* (NELSON, 12/6), is surely a little ungrateful to so indispensable a hero.

Laughing Cavalier

MR. EMIL LUDWIG, in his latest character-sketch, *Roosevelt: A Study in Fortune and Power* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 10/6), disclaims any intimate acquaintance with American party politics. In his usual bold and lofty manner he presents a portrait almost in the abstract, scrutinising details of environment, physiognomy and mannerism rather than any record of technical accomplishment in order to assess his latest hero's stature. Certainly this President, son of a rich father, spoilt darling of fortune who turns to public affairs for the fun of the fight, is an ideal subject for such treatment. He must stand immortally as the statesman-aristocrat suddenly smashed down by apparently hopeless disease who won back to a marginal sufficiency of health through will-power and the force of victorious laughter. The author has seen him at work, unguarded, accessible, surrounded by toys that remind him of the sea, rejoicing in a thousand human contacts. Alert and wary behind a front of charm and cheer, he has been invested with power at a crisis not less than that of the gloomy despots of Europe, yet has remained the friend of all the people and, in untroubled serenity through a hundred defeats, a champion of the middle democratic way between rival murky totalitarianisms.

Mr. Maxwell's Microcosm

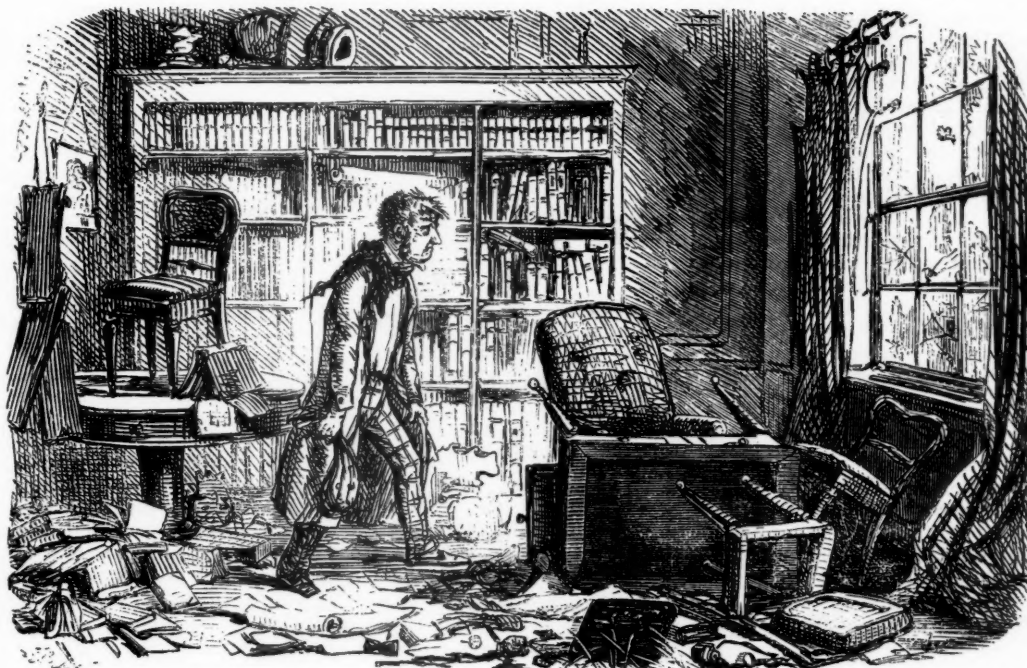
The series of novels which Mr. W. B. MAXWELL is producing under the general title of "Men and Women," of which *Everslade* (HUTCHINSON, 8/6) is the third, are written, we are told, according to a "hitherto unused method." But it appears to have much in common with the method employed by M. JULES ROMAINS in his wonderful panorama, *Men of Good Will*. Within a limited environment—Paris in the French book, a Hampshire village in the present instance—characters are successively introduced, separately or in groups, to continue on the scene or to fade quickly out, to coalesce with others or to remain in isolation, until a verisimilar microcosm is built up. The environment, however, is not inescapable: Cranford goes forward to Babylon or, more exactly, some of the more conspicuous denizens of *Everslade*—the shady and seedy lawyer to whom a turn of the wheel brings wealth, the impoverished peer seeking new fortune as a guinea-pig, with their respective families—find their way to London. There we are presented with gangsterdom in filmland and domestic melodrama in Mayfair, for Mr. MAXWELL's invention does not lack variety. The curious thing is that, while his people inhabit a world of aeroplanes, chain-cinemas, cocktail-parties and Spanish wars, their sentiments and speeches might mostly have been



"MAY I ASK YOU TO BE A WITNESS, SIR?"
"RATHER! WHAT HAPPENED?"

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SUBJECT FOR A PICTURE.—IRRITABLE GENTLEMAN DISTURBED BY BLUEBOTTLE

John Leech, July 19th, 1851

lifted from a Victorian novel—or novelette. DISRAELI would have found a heroine to his taste in the lawyer's romantic daughter who, having married a marquess, reverts in widowhood to her first love, the mere heir to a barony.

A Still Higher Wind Off Jamaica

It is nine years since Mr. RICHARD HUGHES' last novel was published, but *In Hazard* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 7/6) has been worth waiting for. The story of how a large British cargo-ship off the West Indies weathered such a hurricane as had never been known, it has a peculiar quality hard to describe; it is not enough to say that it tells you exactly what happened and just how everybody felt, for that might have been so boring. The secret is probably Mr. HUGHES' knack of making everything extremely clear in a very simple way, as if he had been through the ordeal himself and were describing it to a circle of intelligent children who would be embarrassed by heroics and unwilling to be fobbed off with any slurring-over of detail; and the result is a novel which is both moving and exciting. As the

gale batters the vessel into helplessness her crew are put to a test of character which strips all pretence, and as the fury of the struggle wears them down their minds take flight on feverish excursions into the past, where Mr. HUGHES' fancy serves him as well as does the deliberate realism of the rest of the book.

Eastward Ho!

Not feeling quite certain at the outset which were the East Indies and which the West—a confusion she seems to have shared with COLUMBUS—Miss THEODORA BENSON luckily plumped for Java, Sumatra, Bali and Celebes as the scene of two-and-a-half months' impromptu exploration. *In the East My Pleasure Lies* (HEINEMANN, 12/6) is the happy result of this dashing expedition; and if one regrets that the writer has sacrificed grace of style to intimacy, it is only because her animated encounters with ex-cannibals and head-hunters, consuls and colonial governors, scientists and traders would read ten times more piquantly in classical English. Her alert intelligence, her unaffected sense of fun

and beauty have made admirable use of their time; and the anthropologist is not the only expert who will envy her a wealth of first-hand information about the highly dissimilar natives of her four islands. She has the pleasantest of ways with animals—even insects; and few of her readers will be able to resist a visit to the Zoo's Small Cat House to see the binturong, Max, whose portrait, with proprietress, is the pick of her excellent photographs.

The Innkeeper Again

Confessions of an Innkeeper (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 8/6) is the casual continuation of Mr. JOHN FOTHERGILL'S *Diary* which took the town's fancy some seven years ago. The "Spread Eagle" and the "Royal Ascot" have relapsed into more normal ways, but the twice-checked host, banners still flying, now tells of the transmogrification of the "Three Swans." Having learnt by harsh experience that there are fewer people who care for good wine and food than pretend to; that the most voluble devotees of the utterly adorable "Spread Eagle" to-day gaily desert it for the perfectly marvellous and divine "Split Herring" to-morrow; that bright and dull cads and snobs who don't know how to say "Thank you" bound and abound; that business gentlemen as business gentlemen don't care two stamps about doing things well but only about doing things profitably—our inn-keeper still built castles of hope in the air of a kindlier and more generous province (he thinks) than the soft spoiled south. This is a solidier, more sober and pleasanter book than its predecessor, and there is a tribute to the fine integrity and loyalty of simple souls that does the diarist credit. One reader at least will make early pilgrimage to Market Harborough to take a drink from the hands of "Beatrice."



"IT'S A SHAME THEY DON'T PUT PROPER STRAPS FOR CHILDREN."

The Women March

It is a great wonder that those who constitute half the world and are inclined to see more clearly than men the imbecility of war have made so small an effort to stop it. In *The Impregnable Women* (CAPE, 7/6) Mr. ERIC LINKLATER, to whose outrageous and delightful pen the Aristophanic theme is excellently suited, describes how a handful of Englishwomen put an end to the muddle and slaughter of the next European conflict by the obvious expedient of banding together all their sisters in a universal love-strike. The fight is in the main England and Germany against

France and Russia. The British Cabinet retires *via* the Amusements Park at Blackpool (the Ministry of Munitions being temporarily housed in the Palace of Fun) to Edinburgh, where the women's leaders, taking possession of the Castle (which is the War Office), successfully withstand an embarrassed siege of husbands and lovers, and fire a movement so widespread that war rapidly becomes impossible. Mr. LINKLATER naturally skates lightly over the difficulties, for this is not a plan but a satirical fantasy, and strictly speaking he weakens his argument by the romantic attachment to robust violence which runs through most of his work; but he has written a very good book. It is desperately funny in places, with all the wild absurdity of situation

which he contrives so well; underneath it is a bitter attack on the evils which war breeds and the tribute of a poet to the unspoken heroism which simple men may have to show quite needlessly again.

Angling

Even if *Death is No Sportsman* (FABER AND FABER, 7/6) were not an admirable tale of crime and detection, its setting and its style would attract deserved attention. Mr. CYRIL HARE is comparatively a newcomer in this crowded field of fiction, but by placing the scene of his murder on the bank of a delightful trout-stream, by involving ardent fishermen in the trouble that ensued and by giving, so to speak, a plan of the course, he more than justifies his excursion. The representative from Scotland Yard, *Inspector Mallett*, who undertakes the task of solving this riparian mystery, is quiet in his methods and charmingly free from mannerisms; the villain of the piece is neatly and fairly concealed; and if the *Chief Constable* is at times

rather asinine, that is a common enough failing with the Chief Constables of crime fiction. Nor is this particular specimen entirely destitute of intelligence. This is not an outstanding book, but it has the virtue of originality, and readers of detective novels will do well to make careful note of it.

Mr. Punch on Tour

At Darlington, from July 23 to August 20, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern *Punch* Artists will be on view at the Public Art Gallery. The Exhibition will be shown later at Middlesbrough and Nottingham.

Invitations to visit the Exhibition at any of these places will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, *Punch* Office, 10, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

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Charivaria

SINCE a well-known jockey fell out of bed and broke his collar-bone it has been suggested that night-mares should be made to carry stirrups.

★ ★ ★

Keep Your Temper, Doctor

"Dr. Dafoe, discussing the request for an enquiry, said he might make a foul statement later."—*Bermuda Paper*.

★ ★ ★

A vicar complains that one of his wealthiest parishioners gave a bad shilling to the church funds. Sheer ostentation, of course. A bad sixpence would have been enough.

★ ★ ★

Employees in a tinned-fruit factory are encouraged to sing whilst at work. They just make merry whilst they can.

★ ★ ★

A chimpanzee at an American zoo is said to be virtually human in its intelligence. Only the other day it was heard to mutter, "Am I my keeper's brother?"

★ ★ ★

A radio expert declares that foreigners listen to our programmes just as keenly as we listen to theirs. In this way, no programme is entirely wasted.

★ ★ ★

In the course of a lecture the other day an author told his audience that he proposed to his wife by letter. He enclosed a stamped addressed envelope, of course, in case of rejection.

★ ★ ★

"BOOKMAKER WAS ARRESTED ON BEACH.
SLIPS FOUND ON HIM."

South Coast Paper.

A University costume would have saved him.



"Pomeranian dogs have no reason to be so conceited," says a woman writer. After all, they are no better than we are.

★ ★ ★

"Women drivers are more likely to hit other cars and stationary objects than men."—*Observer*.

Men dodge about so much when they see a woman driver.

★ ★ ★

A lady sought a divorce recently on the ground that her husband spent too much time at the racecourse. She denies that she took him for better or worse.

★ ★ ★

An American mother is walking backwards across the State of Maine and has just completed the first day's journey of ten miles. There the mater rests for the moment.

★ ★ ★

The staff of a German newspaper do daily gas-mask drill. Then they resume their journalistic duties, wearing only their ordinary Press-muzzles.

★ ★ ★

In a Past v. Present school match the other day both sides scored 187. Just another old school tie.

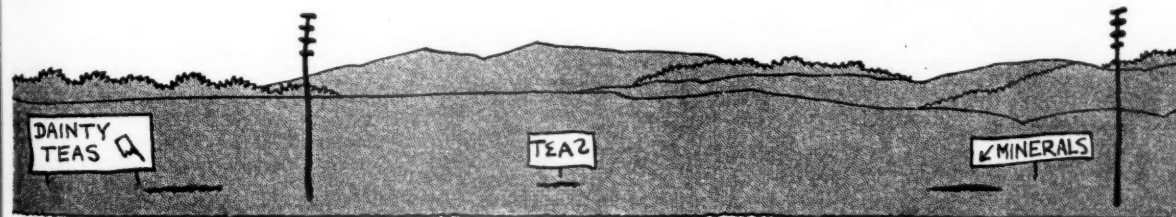
★ ★ ★

"Two large brown logs tethered near the gate give warning if anyone approaches."—*Daily Paper*.
Of course their bark is worse than their bite.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent says that in 1914 he built an air-raid shelter which is still in good repair. He is thinking of serving teas in it and calling it *Ye Olde Worlde Dugge-Oute*.

The Editor's
decision
is final



Letters to Officialdom

XX.—Re Parking

To the Town Clerk, the Town Hall, Blight-on-Sea.

SIR,—As a holiday visitor to Blight-on-Sea I beg to inform you that the parking facilities here are disgraceful. Wherever I stop my car I am badgered by a policeman or a servant of the Corporation and compelled to proceed elsewhere. Is this the way to encourage visitors? Are you aware that the death-rate in Blight-on-Sea exceeds the birth-rate by 3·1 per thousand, and that pettifogging regulations of this sort must be a contributory cause, inasmuch as people are discouraged by them from taking up residence here? Your statement that this is the "Healthiest Holiday Haven in England" would be much more convincing if you could show an increased birth-rate—but it never *will* increase, Sir, so long as you discourage people like my wife and myself from coming here.

I am writing this letter, however, because yesterday I suffered an unusually galling experience: an experience which, unless you are prepared to compensate me, will justify my bringing an action against the Corporation. I wish to be perfectly reasonable. I admit that Blight-on-Sea is not London, where one may leave a car for two hours within half-a-mile of one's destination—the purpose of this admirable arrangement being that if one wants to leave a car unattended for as long as two hours one usually intends visiting a cinema or a theatre, which lasts three hours. You see? One is not harried immediately one draws

up, as in Blight-on-Sea. One is not compelled to move on and move on until one is too late for the start of the performance. That is what I find so infuriating here, and that is what conduced to the catastrophe I suffered yesterday. This is what happened:

At 1.45 p.m. my wife, my daughter Hyacinthe and I set out in our car to visit the cinema in Ship Street. The car-park was full, so we tried to leave the car in a *cul-de-sac*, but a policeman moved us on. We then tried to leave it on the Marine Parade, but a beach inspector moved us on. The time was then 2 p.m., when the show was due to begin. Espying some sand-dunes in the distance we went to park the car there, but they turned out to be on the golf-course. So we went on up the cliff road to the Castle car-park, where we fortunately found one vacant space between two cars.

It took me about ten minutes to manoeuvre the car into this space, as there was only an inch to spare on either side. However, I managed it. Then we found it was impossible to open the doors enough to get out of the car, and when I tried to drive forward again the self-starter failed, so I had to open the windscreen and throw the starting-handle to a passer-by. Directly we moved the car out of that constricted space we got out and, with the help of the passer-by, pushed it back again. Just then it began raining so hard that we had to give up the idea of walking into the town, so I climbed into the car over the bonnet and through the open windscreen, and by 2.50 we were on our way again, looking for a place to park.

At 3.0 o'clock we came upon an unfinished road, but a builder's foreman

appeared and said the land was private. In desperation we drove on up to the downs until we were out of sight of human habitation and were about to park the car on the grass when a mounted policeman rode up and said we were more than fifteen yards from the road. When we tried to park *within* fifteen yards of the road the bank proved to be too steep. So we parked on the road itself. Then a road-patrol came up and moved us on.

Presently we reached the pretty little hamlet of Deadleigh, which nestles in a fold of the great hills, and parked the car in a field, but a farmer turned us out. Eventually, tired out, we were lucky enough to find a rubbish dump at the foot of a disused quarry surrounded by swampy ground, but as we were now five miles from Blight-on-Sea and the time was 3.45 we decided against going to the cinema and drove back for tea and a bathe instead.

When we reached the Sea View Tea Shanty we were absolutely exhausted. No sooner had I sat down, however, than the manageress asked me not to leave the car outside. I was too exasperated to speak. I put the saucer on my cup to keep the tea warm, went out and drove the car to the very end of the Marine Parade, where I parked it on the steep concrete slope running down to the beach. As ill-luck would have it, the slope proved too much for the brakes and the car rolled down on to the sands, coming to rest a couple of hundred yards away. My annoyance, however, was tempered by the reflection that the car might just as inoffensively be left there as on the concrete slope, since no person was visible in any direction. Imagine, then, my unbounded fury when a coastguard shouted through a megaphone from the top of the cliffs to tell me that parking was not permitted on the sands.

As you will understand, this was the last straw. There rose in me that spirit of revolt which is a family characteristic of ours. I got into the car, sounded the horn to indicate my contempt for your silly regulations, and drove on round the corner of the cliffs. Half-a-mile farther on I reached a cave. I parked the car in this cave. I did not mind whether it belonged to the Blight-on-Sea Corporation or the National Trust, or even if there were any young ladies using it as a shelter in which to undress for bathing. Indeed my mood was such that I should not have looked twice at any partially undressed young ladies. That was the way I felt. I just parked the car in the cave and then started back to Blight-on-Sea for tea.

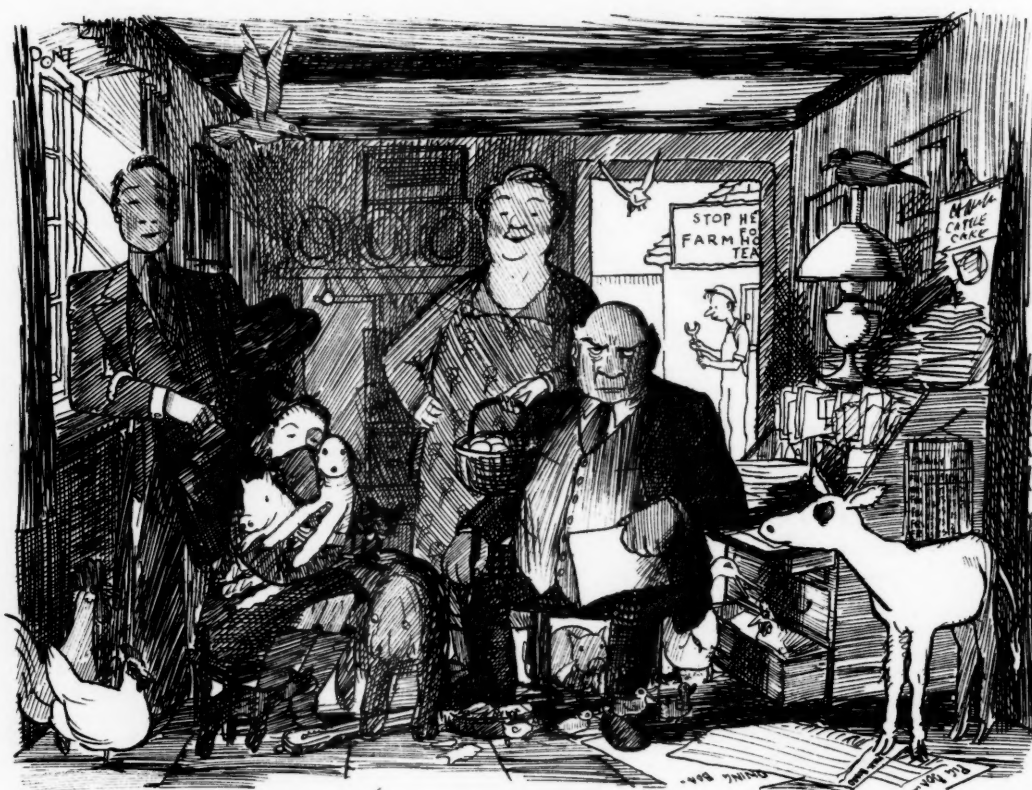
I now come to the climax of these





"I'VE READY"

A picture from the Utterly Aryan and Absolutely Romantic school of painting now made compulsory
by H-rr H-TL-R



AT HOME

THE HAPPY FARMER

exasperating experiences. First of all, though, I want to know why a notice saying "No Parking" was not erected by the cave? I want to know why, in this place of all places, there was no policeman or beach inspector or road-patrol to tell me to move on? I want to know these things because when I went back at eight o'clock to fetch the car I was dumbfounded to find it three-quarters submerged by the incoming tide. There was nothing I could do but stand helplessly by and look on, and even while I stood helplessly by and looked on a wave bigger than the rest smashed the windscreen and draped seaweed all over the roof.

When I went back to get the car this morning there was also a big rock covered with barnacles on the roof. The speedometer too was out of order, the needle registering 50 m.p.h. instead of—as is normal when the car is at a standstill—10 m.p.h. When I opened the bonnet to flood the carburettor I

was stung by a jellyfish. For nearly an hour I tried to start the car. Then I gave it up, and it is still there.

Kindly inform me what steps the Corporation will take to compensate me for the loss of my car, which although it is twelve years old, I value at not less than £10. I am, however, quite agreeable to repairs being effected by way of compensation, provided the Corporation bear the cost of having it towed back by a breakdown lorry or, if feasible, by the lifeboat at high tide.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—Please attend to this matter as soon as possible, as I am not anxious to prolong my stay in Blight-on-Sea. Without a car there is nothing to do to pass the time.

"HIT TALLEST P.-C. IN STOMACH."
Heading in "Evening Standard."

Well, how high was he expected to get?

Before You Go

BEFORE we leave for our well-earned holidays, which we are all agreed we could not do without, we might think for a moment of those many, many women in the poor districts of London, whose need of rest and change is ten times greater than ours and whose only hope of either lies in us. The Women's Holiday Fund exists to give to these overworked and uncomplaining mothers, and their children, a few glorious days of freedom by the sea or in the country. It is a cause for which Mr. Punch has appealed before, and never in vain; and this year he asks his readers for a special effort to help the Fund to send away a new record of 2,000 women. Please send a donation to the Hon. Treasurer, Women's Holiday Fund, 76, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1.

Bring Your Own Varnish

SOMETIMES it seems to me that if I had a few followers engaged in recording everything I did and said, and their records survived the impending collapse of civilisation (you remember civilisation? the good old days?), people who read them conscientiously, a very little at a time, would think I had been a great man. This strikes me most often when I have been looking at my "World's Classics" edition of *The Analects of Confucius*.

The fact is, short aphorisms are almost the only writings that get deeply thought about, and almost anything seems to be profound if you think about it deeply. I won't go so far as to say that I am in the habit of throwing off aphorisms as profound as those of CONFUCIUS. What I do say is that I, like everybody else, am continually making remarks which, if translated into good English and printed by themselves in large type under some such heading as Book IV., Chapter III.—let's say Book XXIV., Chapter CLXVIII.: sounds more professional—would seem profound to people reading them hundreds of years hence. Provided, I mean, that those people had been told they *were* profound and took the trouble to think about them.

Look at this:—

Book XIV. Chapter XXIV.

The Master said: "The progress of the nobler-minded man is upwards, the progress of the inferior man is downwards."

Perhaps you believe I made that one up? No. It's a real one. I take the liberty of imagining that I *could* have made it up, but I didn't. Your immediate reaction, I dare say, on reading it was to reflect that you didn't need CONFUCIUS to tell you that. Next comes the feeling that, CONFUCIUS being a great man, he must have meant something more; and next, in the conscientious, comes the determination to find out what more he could have meant. CONFUCIUS can't lose. Whatever conclusion is reached—and the conscientious

won't stop till they get to a good one—CONFUCIUS gets the credit for having meant it all the time. No doubt he did mean it all the time, but it would be all the same if he hadn't.

Book XX. Chapter IV.

The Master said: "He that wishes to remain on his own side of the river does not enter the ferryman's boat."

That's one of mine—I just dashed it off. You will readily agree that it sounds a bit obvious. But I will bet anyone a hundred and forty-two pounds ten that if it were introduced into *The Analects of Confucius* no incongruity would be noticed by the uninstructed reader; and the more I think about it the more profound it seems.

I am not overlooking the possibility that CONFUCIUS made a certain number of deliberately trivial remarks, for a similar reason to that which made the dying farmer in the fable tell his sons there was treasure buried in his land: a wish to encourage digging. But I do suggest that after all the deep thought that has been bestowed in the last two thousand years on every word CONFUCIUS spoke, it is going to be impossible to convict him of having ever said anything trivial, intentionally or not. His every recorded utterance is doomed to be always significant.

Book XXI. Chapter XV.

The Master said: "At this moment I am not able to think of anything good to say."

Never, so far as I know, did CONFUCIUS make this observation, probably because it was never true. But consider it. Consider it deeply, for a long time, on the assumption that there is something there for the diligent truth-miner, on the assumption that it *was* made by CONFUCIUS for a profoundly wise purpose.

Let me summarise the lessons a really determined burrower could extract in these circumstances from Book XXI., Chapter XV. Humility: the sage admits he can't think of anything. Economy of effort (or give it your own name): the sage refuses to waste energy on the production of a thought for which there is no immediate need. Consideration for others: the sage tells his hearers, in effect, to take a few minutes off. Humour: the sage pretends he can't think of anything, and since he is a sage that is a laughable inaccuracy (ha! ha!). Optimism: *at this moment* the sage can't . . . but later, just you watch. Self-knowledge: the sage realises at once when—

I could go on like that all night. You see the idea. All those are merely the messages—they may be mutually contradictory, but further reflection should show which are the right ones—that one can get out of the chapter in a few minutes. It seems to me highly probable that the cumulative thought of the Best Minds over a thousand years or so would perceive in it almost the whole of ultimate truth.

And remember, when I first put it down I didn't think it meant anything, except the unvarnished fact (about my own situation, not the Master's). As for all that lovely varnish . . .

I have an idea for another chapter.

Book XXXV. Chapter XI.

The Master said: "A man regards a fact as good or bad, according to the quality of his own varnish."

There. That should produce a good thought sooner or later. Think about it for a thousand years and then come and see me again. Two guineas, please. R. M.



"THEN, IF THE PEOPLE GOT TO LIKE IT, YOU COULD ALWAYS PUT A TAX ON IT."

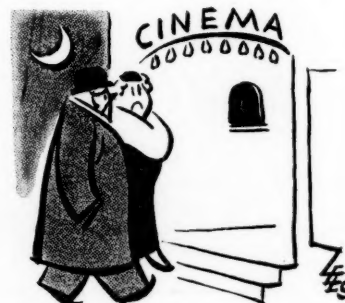
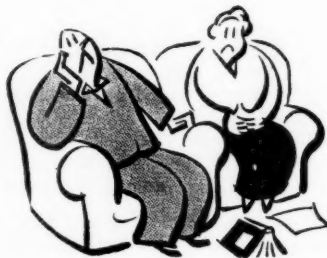
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Cri de Cœur

In Cleopatra Court

I have a modern labour-saving flat,
 And there are luxuries of every sort,
 And swimming-pools, and squash, and this and that,
 A tenants' shop with regular deliveries,
 And porters standing firm in splendid liveries,
 And—best and choicest gift—
 A deep and luscious carpet in the lift.
 There's heating, there's concealed electric-light,
 And George can very nearly stand upright.
 The tenants just above
 Too often give their furniture a shove:
 It sometimes sounds to me
 As though they had been cutting down a tree.
 I know them well enough to wish to strike them
 But not enough to honour or to like them.
 Day-long, in every key,
 Loud music comes to me,
 Piercing with strident chords the cardboard walls.
 The traffic noise would drown Victoria Falls.
 Here are no families, no joy, no strife,
 No tears, no laughter, hardly any life,
 No angry father chides his erring daughter,
 And no one has their aunt to stay,
 Nor children on half-holiday.
 There's neither peace, excitement or surprise,
 Nor constancy, except in the hot water.
 But day by day, alone, with furtive eyes,
 The tenantry, a dour and lifeless set,
 Ill-fed from restaurant or kitchenette,
 Creeps bowler-hatted past the liveried porter.

Come quickly to the agents; let us take
 A house on seven floors in Devon Square,
 Let us bid Cousin Claude and Great-aunt Claire
 And Uncle Archie, who is such a rake,
 And Grandmamma, and little Nephew Ernest,
 The noisiest, the meanest and the sternest,
 And with them we will all our lifetime share.
 Come rich, come poor, come Red, come Jew, come Fascist,
 A household larger than HAROUN-AL-RASCHID,
 I'll live on speaking terms with one and all.
 And I myself will clean the steps and hall,
 And I myself will carry up the trays,
 And I will count the stuff on washing-days
 And never ask assistance,
 And I myself will answer the front-door
 And offer sales-resistance
 To people selling wares of every sort,
 And I myself will scrub the basement floor,
 Rather than live in comfort any more
 At Cleopatra Court.



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"GEORGE IS ALWAYS A GOOD LISTENER."

Research

"I'M seriously thinking of writing a period-novel," Laura observed, with an air of deep consideration that told me at once the idea had only that moment crossed her mind.

She added that everybody was writing period-novels now.

"In that case," I suggested, "wouldn't it be better to do something quite different?"

"You mean a tough American story, where they all shoot each other and go up in elevators and eat pretzels?"

I said that I thought she had placed these activities in the wrong order, but Laura replied that even if she had it didn't matter a bit, because the whole treatment of the time-factor had altered in modern fiction.

So I at once said that perhaps she had better write a period-novel after all, if that was how she felt about the time-factor and—still more—about modern fiction.

"There's only one question in my mind," Laura said.

"Whether anyone would ever publish it?"

"No, no."

"Whether it would ever get finished?"

"Certainly not."

"Whether it would ever get started?"

"The *only* question," said Laura, "is what period to write about. I think the Victorian period has been overdone, and I don't care much for 'Gadzooks!' and the Georges were rather coarse."

"What about Alfred and the cakes?"

"Wouldn't it need rather a lot of research? I mean, is anything known about him *except* the cakes? It would be too like King Canute and the waves."

I saw what she meant and suggested (a) Good Queen Bess and Merrie England, (b) the Fall of Babylon, (c) Henry IV. and a few jousts and tournaments and perhaps a falcon or two, and (d) the Ice Age.

There seemed to be something against them all.

Then Laura said that as by a coincidence she was going to be in London for the Eton and Harrow cricket-match and two sherry-parties, she

would go to the British Museum Reading-room and look up something.

From thence onward one was enabled to trace the course of Laura's period-novel from a series of postcards—all very good postcards too, obviously obtained from the stand in the entrance hall of the British Museum, and featuring Chinese paintings of the year 5,000 B.C. and so on.

The first one said:

"Cannot decide between the Zulu War 1879 and psychological study of Dr. Johnson."

The next inquired:

"What do you think of Lucy Walters and the Black Box?" And after that: "Absolutely definite, Pilgrim Fathers."

To which I replied as encouragingly as possible that this should make a strong appeal on either side of the Atlantic—which is what is always said, at least by the publishers, about almost any book.

After that came a long silence, broken only by a postcard of two rather primitive animals with horns, standing one on either side of a blue jar. (No, not the fox and the crane. I thought of



"SCENERY IS ALL RIGHT FOR A HOLIDAY; BUT TO LIVE WITH—A THOUSAND TIMES NO!"

that too, but the horns put it right out of court):—

"Frightfully busy. If Encyclopædia Vol. CAST to COLE not in use please bring next time you come. Also, can you find out whether whiskers worn in British Navy prior to 1791? Heaps of love."

I replied, on an inferior postcard simply showing the new bridge at Brimp St. Hollytop, that I thought Nelson had been too much written about already.

The answer, received nearly a week later, informed me simply and straightforwardly:

"Absolutely agree. Nelson useless; too many mainsails and top-gallants altogether, but what do you feel about early convict-ship going Botany Bay? Could use up navigation terms discovered when doing Nelson research. Hats at yesterday's sherry too odd altogether; must scrap all ours. When is Jumble-sale? Love, Laura."

My reply was confined to an announcement of the Jumble-sale date.

Perhaps this was more discouraging than it was intended to be, perhaps

Laura's supply of postcards ran out, or perhaps she was merely too deeply involved in research work.

At all events, I heard no more. Unless, indeed, one may count a letter received from Uncle Egbert in which the following passage occurred:—

"Your Aunt Emma and I have heard quite recently from Laura, asking for full particulars of our wedding reception in 1897, with photographs if possible. If the dear child is already planning something for our golden wedding, please make it clear to her that the *thought* is what counts."

One only hopes it is. E. M. D.

Ahem!

"The public school, he said, had given them that little bit of 'je ne sais pas' which had made the Empire what it was."

Cambridge Paper.

"Short of build, round-faced, wearing dark-tinted spectacles, you notice when you meet him that his big mouth bursts from one diplomatic conference to slightest provocation."—*South African Paper*.

Or aren't you observant?

Letters of a Gunner

II.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Let me continue my exposition of the 1001st (A.A.) Battery. It consists of eight guns divided into four lots of two each, and each pair of guns has its own height-finder, predictor and officer. The officer is, naturally in the army, known by initials; he is G.P.O. (meaning this time, Gun Position Officer) and he has a mouthpiece or voice called G.P.O.A. The height-finder is operated by three height-takers, who convey the height to the predictor (by word of mouth, which raises interesting speculations on the possible accuracy of the battery's work on a dark and gloomy night in, say, February, with the guns already in action). After that the predictor does the rest.

The predictor is, in short, the life and soul of the party. In appearance it is a modest steel box standing on a tripod and measuring about three feet long and two feet wide. Its sides are

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sprinkled with round dials and long dials, big handles and little handles, and a couple of eye-pieces which remind one faintly of those disreputable machines on Clackpool Pier labelled "Diverting Nocturnal Events in a Girls' School near Paris" and the like. But inside the predictor must be simply a fascinating mass of cogs and wheels and bevels and rods, sufficient to compensate a whole orphanage for the absence of grandfather's watch.

In one end of the predictor the senior predictorator (I have invented this word: I think it rather nice, don't you?) inserts the height given him by the height-takers. Thereafter the predictor will itself operate all the dials on each gun (so that the gun-layers know what to do with their handles) and at the same time tell the senior assistant predictorator what fuse to use in his shells so that the shell will burst exactly at the spot where the aeroplane will be when the shell gets there, if you follow me. It is as easy as that.

And you've no idea what a lot of things the predictor has to think about before arriving at its decision about the fuse. For one thing there is the barometric pressure to be considered (or how thick is the air that the shell has to push aside in its upward flight for King and Country) and what is the air temperature (likewise affecting the thickness of the air, as I well remember from my early experiments with fire-balloons). Also the direction and strength of the wind (that is announced each day by the War Office, and woe betide it if it alters without leave!), the age of the gun and the state of the ammunition. I have not discovered the apertures through which one inserts the phase of the moon, the horoscope of the G.P.O. (and/or G.P.O.A.) and the time of high water at London Bridge, but I am sure they exist somewhere. Probably underneath.

Of course one cannot expect too much from the instrument. Putting on one side the obvious inquiries about the winner of next year's Derby, in my first flush of enthusiasm I did hope that it might tell me on what day of the week my next birthday will fall, or what is the sixth-wicket Test Match record at the Old Trafford ground, or even the Golden Number for 1940. But no; it is non-competitive. *Old Moore's Almanac*, *Whitaker* and the *Book of Common Prayer* still have their uses. But I must say I am thinking of buying a pocket one for the office, into which I will feed the bank-rate, the percentage increase (or decrease) of the Socialist poll, and the average monthly car-loadings in the State of Texas, and produce in the end at will the yearly



"HELLO—IS THAT THE UNIVERSAL WIG COMPANY?"

attendance at Whipsnade or the net profit of the Gas Light and Coke Company.

There is only one snag to it all. "We operates," as our revered N.C.O., Bombardier Sutcliffe, solemnly puts it, "on the assumption that the enemy plane, or target as we terms it officially, flies in a straight line and at a constant speed." I hope the enemy pilot knows the rules. One sharp right-wheel on his part and one can imagine the poor predictor turning a deep puce and spitting a cogwheel or so in the face of the G.P.O. (or G.P.O.A.).

On the other hand, Boy Killy remains optimistic. "Blimey!" he said, after it had all been explained. "Give 'em another year or so and the whole

blinking battery will be run by a couple of girls and a conveyor-belt."

I am thinking of suggesting a patent on these lines to Lord NUFFIELD.

Your loving Son,
HAROLD.

Old Lags' Corner

"DARTMOOR IS WELL WORTH A
PROLONGED VISIT."
Provincial Newspaper.

"In the case of a 'mutilated' light only the portion which comes between the uprights need be sent, but if a solver desires to send the whole world he can do so."

Acrostic notes in Sunday Paper.

After consulting Archimedes and being shown where to stand.

Correspondence

HOC AND HOL

SIR,—Long ago the Defence of the Realm Act received from His Majesty's subjects the affectionate title of Dora. That was inevitable: and the name was so euphonious and fitting that few inquired whether it was properly respectful to an Act of Parliament.

But, Sir, the precedent should not be followed, as it is increasingly, where there is neither euphony nor fitness. The other day I heard a Minister of the Crown, speaking from the Treasury Bench, refer to "Idak" or "Eyedack." "What," I wondered "is Idak?" Iraq came into my mind, and I imagined some new arrival in the field of foreign affairs. An Eastern potentate? Something to do with Albania? A new star? Perhaps a tooth-paste?

A friend, who had winced at the word, informed me: "He is talking about I.D.A.C.—the Import Duties Advisory Committee."

Sir, if the President of the Board of Trade may toss an "Idac" across the Table one can scarcely object if the Opposition answer "Oke."

Some Societies, I know, think that pet-names composed of their initials bring them quickly into the minds and hearts of the people. But they may do just the other thing, and cast a fog of obscurity about them. For many years

I have heard worthy friends talking about "Scapa." I always pretend that I know what "Scapa" is. I do know that it is a good society and does good work for the "amenities." But what exactly S.C.A.P.A. stands for I cannot tell. Moreover, I cannot find the Society in the Telephone Book.

Now, Sir, I know all about that other admirable Society for the Preservation of Ancient Buildings: and I would do anything (short of cheque-writing) to assist it. But if someone said to me, "You must come to the next meeting of 'Spab,'" I should wince and creep away, wondering.

My secretary tells me that she belongs to a body which calls itself "Stutis" (Secondary, Technical and University Teachers Insurance Society). Do the Mothers' Union, I wonder, call themselves "Mu"? Do the members of the Pentecostal League of Prayer speak affectionately of "Plop"?

Then, I see, there is a Federation of Progressive Societies and Individuals. Good old "Fopsi"!

The mischief is that people who start societies or movements or Bills want to have it both ways. They invent a revoltingly long and wordy title, and think that, by this device, they can enjoy the advantages of brevity as well.

Well, Sir, they can't. This practice, at least in the House of Commons, must cease. If not I give notice that I shall rise in my place one day and utter as follows:—

"Mr. Cowm¹, as a Member of Hoc², I protest against the action of Hol³ in mutilating by their amendments this admirable Bill.

"As the President of Bot⁴ has so well said, the functions of Hol are different from the functions of Hoc. In Hoc we have not only the President of Bot and the Sos⁵ for War, but the First Lot⁶, the head of Maf⁷ and all the principal Sosses—not to mention Coe⁸. But in Hol, apart from Fo⁹, Io¹⁰ and Boe¹¹ (and of course the L.C.), there are no Ministers. Not even Mol¹² is represented in Hol. It follows, therefore, that Hoc is better than Hol. And, Sir, if Hol want to provoke another Hoc-Hol conflict, then I, for one, Sir, am ready."

I am, Sir, your obedient servant,
APH

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

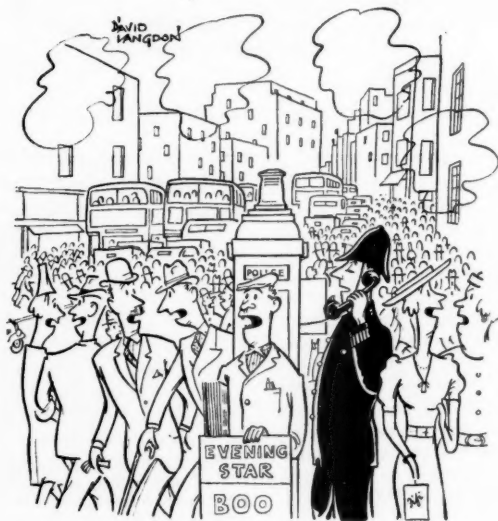
SIR,—I am very glad indeed that dear Mr. Chamberlain is getting on so well with his appeasements. I am an old woman now and don't understand the modern ways, but will anyone tell me this, if those naughty British ships have no business to go to Spain and deserve all the bombs they get, why is it so naughty of Mr. Franco to bomb them, I mean, if it's quite all right, why do we object, I mean if I say to Maggie Maggie you may play in the road if you like but it is very dangerous and I shan't look after you I can't blame the motorist for running over Maggie can I, but I am only an old woman and it is all very difficult.

SUSAN BLUE

WHERE DO THE RAZOR BLADES GO?

SIR,—For many years your correspondents have been discussing the old question, "What ought one to do with old razor-blades?" I never heard a wholly satisfactory answer to the problem; but I believe I can guess what many people do do with them. They send them back to the makers. A few years ago the blades of my favourite firm used to endure in action for many days—sometimes weeks. Now, as a rule, they have to be pensioned off after a couple of days. Is my beard more brutal than it was (I think not)? Or are the makers cleaning up the old

- ¹ Chairman of Ways and Means
- ² House of Commons
- ³ House of Lords
- ⁴ Board of Trade
- ⁵ Secretary of State
- ⁶ Lord of the Admiralty
- ⁷ Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
- ⁸ Chancellor of the Exchequer
- ⁹ Foreign Office
- ¹⁰ India Office
- ¹¹ Board of Education
- ¹² Ministry of Labour



"YES, ALL QUIET IN OXFORD STREET. . . ."



"WILL YOU KINDLY STOP YOUR DOG HOWLING WHILE I PRACTICE?"

blades of the man next-door and sending them back to me? If so, I must ask the man next-door to return them to the makers a little sooner.

HENRY POSS

THE FIRST DUCKLINGS

SIR,—Three weeks ago a female wild duck passed my house with four ducklings hatched and reared on Chiswick Eytot. Last week a duck passed with ten ducklings. Is this a record? I do not know if it was the same duck.

TERESA MOLE

P.S.—Till I was 43 I thought that a partridge was the feminine gender of pheasant, like duck and drake. Can any of your readers beat this?

OUR LEGISLATORS

SIR,—Yesterday, I see, when the Bees (Regulation) Bill was discussed, only 375 of our M.P.'s were sufficiently conscious of their duties to be present in their places. What do we pay them for?

ELECTOR

SIR,—If some of our M.P.'s would condescend to visit their constituencies from time to time instead of talking nonsense (or worse) at Westminster,

they might begin to understand the opinion of the people who send them there.

DISGUSTED

SIR,—Thank God that in spite of everything we have a free Parliament elected by a free people enjoying the rights of free speech.

DEMOCRAT

SIR.—Can Parliament do nothing but talk? What are they for?

DEMOCRAT II.

TIDES IN THE AIR

SIR,—I see that the scientists have discovered that there are tides in the air, and that (70 miles above the earth) the moon lifts the atmosphere 5,280 feet twice a day. An interesting question at once occurs to me—What happens in the considerable space which is then left unoccupied? I have warned my two girls not to fly at this height in case of accidents, and I will not press the question further.

But perhaps the scientists will now turn their attention to the kindred problem which I have so often posed in your columns—What happens at Wandsworth about half-an-hour after high water at Billingsgate?

As your readers know, if it is high water at Gravesend at 12 noon it is high water at London Bridge at 1.4 and at Kew Bridge at 2 P.M. At 1.15, therefore, the tide is rushing out at Gravesend, and it is beginning to run out at London Bridge. But at Hammersmith it is still rushing in, as anyone can see who takes the trouble to stand at London and Hammersmith Bridges at that time. But there is not enough water in the river (especially after the recent drought) to enable it to run both ways for so long a period without causing a shortage somewhere. It follows, therefore, that at some point, at some moment of time there must be dry land (as in the crossing of the Red Sea). Where is this point, and time? I have always said Wandsworth—at 1.31. Can any of your readers help me?

A. P. H.

"HUNTING APPOINTMENTS

NORTHERN COUNTIES OTTER HOUNDS

Mon., June 20 . . .	Chipchase Mill . . .	10.0
Thur., June 23 . . .	In district	10.0
Sat., June 25 . . .	In district	10.0

Three points for win, one for draw."

Newcastle Paper.

Just to give the otters something to play for.

Reverse the Adage

"No woman should marry a teetotaler or a man who does not smoke."—*A recent dictum.*

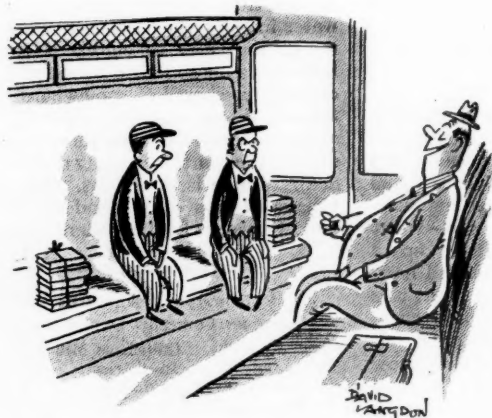
I'VE heard it said that the world's great teachers,
Though (narrowly speaking) sound,
Do far more good to their fellow-creatures
If taken the wrong way round;
For instance, what could at sight be saner
Than this that a grave sage spoke:
*No woman should marry a total abstainer
Or a man who does not smoke.*

'Tis true no doubt from the female angle;
The greenest of all her kind
With some nefarious end to wangle
Will wait till her victim's dined,
And he at whose frown the household sit up
And even the children quail,
If caught off guard when he's fairly lit up,
Is clay to the potter's nail.

But what of him who is blessed with daughters,
He who abjures the weed
And finds no relish in ardent waters,
Is he not steel indeed?
If Valerie's shaky in her finances
Or Sheila's after a hat,
He jumps, you'd think, on those maiden fancies
And that is the end of that?

Wot well his troubles are just beginning,
The clouds are about him then,
For Valerie's aye at her best when sinning
And Sheila has cheek for ten;
Observe him finally doomed to fork out,
And then, though his need be grim,
He strikes no match, he can pull no cork out:
One wouldn't give much for him.

But mark yon other. Serene and mellow
He yields with an instant grace,
Then sips for solace of something yellow
And puts a pipe in his face;



"SOME OF THE HAPPIEST DAYS OF MY LIFE WERE SPENT AT SCHOOL."

And him of these I adjudge the gainer
Though equally both be broke;
*So let none wed who's a total abstainer
Or the man who does not smoke.*

DUM-DUM.

Hark, Hark! the Dunnock (or Hedge Sparrow)

I AM in the mood to be rather silly about birds.

Nothing could be easier as a matter of fact, or more thoroughly British. More English men and women are silly about birds, I am prepared to maintain, than about dogs—which is saying something. Look at St. Francis, not that he was English particularly, and that other chap who put a linnet in a box and gave it to a pack of women to look after. They let it out of course, and then where were they?

I could tell you a story about a steeplejack that would surprise you. This steeplejack nested one year at the top of a very high elm, building the untidy nest of twigs and bracken typical of its kind, and laid four fine if slightly speckled eggs. Unfortunately, as it turned out, there was a hole in the bottom of the nest and the eggs fell to the ground one after another and were irretrievably ruined. What did this sagacious little steeplejack do? It laid its next clutch of eggs on the ground, afterwards flying up with them to the nest, where they immediately fell through the hole again and were destroyed no less thoroughly than the first. Undeterred by this second disaster, the bird now brought the nest down to the ground, where the hole could no longer frustrate her maternal instinct, and then flew back to the top of the tree to unburden herself of a further four eggs, which fell with praiseworthy accuracy into the nest and disintegrated into a thousand pieces. Having no more eggs to lay the bird then took itself off, crying bitterly.

"Steeplejack" should probably read "sandpiper" throughout the above anecdote. Steeplejacks, as has often been pointed out, do not nest in elms.

My great-grandmother kept a tame buzzard in the pantry before she took to drink. But that was years ago. Now she keeps an emu, which, so she says, suffers from hallucinations. Her idea is that the bird thinks it's a parrot, and she covers it up every night with a green cloth, which she got off great-grandfather's billiard-table, to make it feel more at home. The joke is, in a way, that the bird is a parrot, but nobody dare tell her.

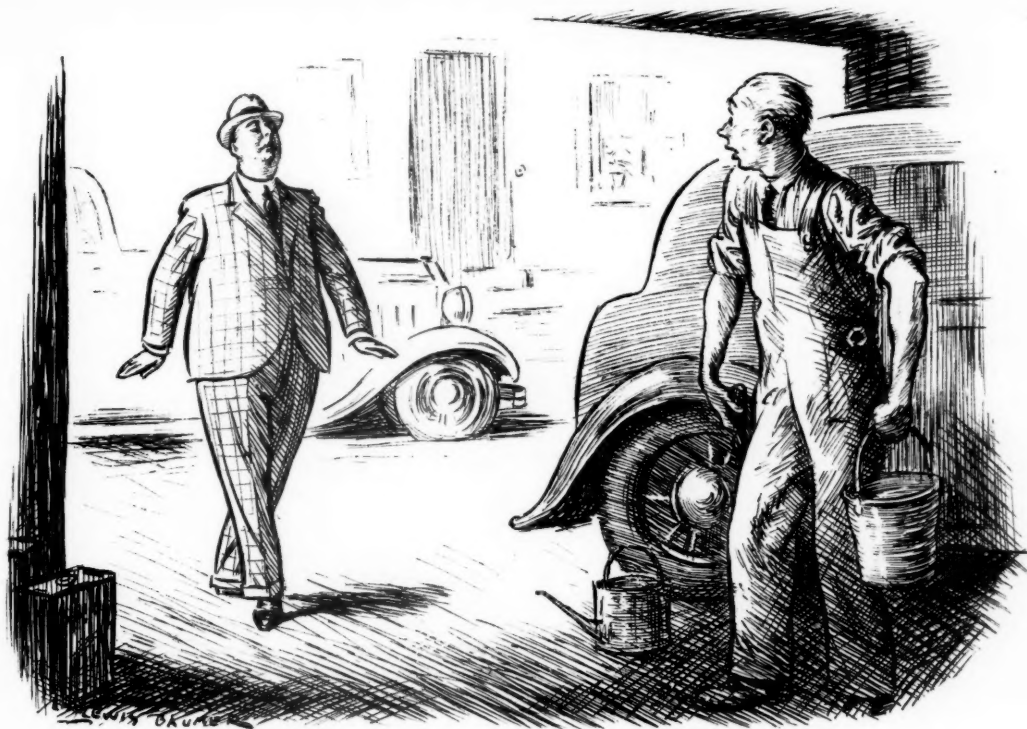
Here's another good story about birds. It is about a willow titmouse—or rather the *song* of a willow titmouse, which is a rather different pair of shoes. Always be careful, if you are silly about birds like me, to distinguish between the *bird* and its *song*. You will recognise the song because it has no feathers, just as you can tell when a dog is barking by seeing what comes out of the upper windows of neighbouring houses. Well, I got this story (it isn't a story really so much as a description) out of a book called *Songs of Wild Birds*, by E. M. Nicholson and Ludwig Koch, and I want you to follow it very closely for that reason. Here's what it says about the song of a willow titmouse heard in January—and in Surrey, for that matter:—

"Sometimes the passage was canary-like, with a suggestion of the chaffinch's vigorous execution; sometimes it reminded me very strongly of the 'swat-swat-swat' phrase of the singing nightingale—a bubbling outburst of very musical notes. Another song noted in June was disjointed and only in parts musical: it contained one flight of strikingly goldfinch-like notes."

Now have you got the song of the willow titmouse firmly fixed in your mind? Because if you haven't my book can clear up those last lingering doubts:—

"Walpole-Bond writes of it: 'Although sometimes com-

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"I WANT WASHING AND POLISHING AND OILING AND GREASING."

mening with a series of hard, tuneless *chips* not strikingly diverse from this note as rendered by *palustris* (the marsh tit), it is much more often from start to finish a deep, rich melodious repetition of a word which may be syllabled as *tchu*. This may better be expressed if I say that, to me at any rate, it resembles a cross between the *jug* of the nightingale and the *twee* of the wood-wren (or perhaps even this bird's 'alarm' of *de-ur*), with perchance a *soupeçon* of the nuthatch's whistle thrown in."

So there you have it. Next time you go into the garden and hear a song which has in it something of the canary, the chaffinch, the nightingale, the goldfinch, the marsh tit, the nightingale (this is another nightingale—the *jug* one, not the old Nightingale of Swat), the wood-wren (apprehensive or not) and enough of the nuthatch to cover a sixpence, you can safely tell your friends there is a willow titmouse about.

It is pleasing to find so large a measure of agreement among ornithologists about the song of the willow titmouse, but unhappily when we turn to the pied flycatcher, as sooner or later we must in these times of trouble and anxiety, we discover a far less satisfactory state of affairs. Walpole-Bond notes the song of this pretty creature as beginning "*whit-chicky, whit-chicky*" and ending in a strain "not so unlike part of the redstart's refrain"—a description with which few readers of this paper will be disposed to quarrel. It might have been thought, particularly in view of Walpole-Bond's standing in the bird-world, that the last word had been spoken about the pied flycatcher.

Not so.

"Hendy's rendering is '*Tchéette, tchéette, tchéette*,

diddle-diddle-dée,' while Howard Saunders' version was '*Tzit-tzit-tzit, trui, trui, trui*.'"

It is not for us perhaps to sit in judgment on the considered pronouncements of these three men. But personally I follow Walpole-Bond, assuming that Howard Saunders was led astray by a ring ousel or the distant notes of a petrol-engine. It is only too easy, when listening to pied flycatchers, to have the attention distracted by some extraneous whistle or explosion.

Is it possible, do you think, that Hendy was trying to be funny?

Another anecdote about my great-grandmother might help to introduce a touch of sanity into the conversation. It appears that one February morning during the Crimean War she was putting coke into a glass bowl, ready for mixing, when a wheatear flew out of the copper and gave vent to its characteristic "*peeble-kebonk, peeble-kebonk, peeble, peeble, peeble, kebonk*" call. With great presence of mind my great-grandmother promptly seized a heavy brass candlestick and prepared to sell her life dearly, but before she could do more than strike a militant attitude her butler (whom I only dimly remember, but he was a fine old man with the courtesy of a departed day) appeared in the doorway and inquired, "Did you call, my lady?" My great-grandmother was so incensed at having her call confused with that of the wheatear that she retired at once into private life, where she rapidly acquired her putative emu and a taste for unsweetened gin. "Let this be a lesson to you all," she used to say.

Need I add that the butler's name was Saunders?

H. F. E.



"JOAN SENDS YOU A SPECIAL MESSAGE, AUGUSTUS. SHE SAYS 'CHEERIO, UNCLE.'"

Muck Ado

The forty inhabitants of the island of Muck have petitioned the Postmaster-General, Major TRYON, for telegraph and telephone facilities. They point out that the neighbouring islands of Rum, Canna and Eigg enjoy these, whereas when a telegram arrives for Muck a signal-fire is lit on Eigg and the ferryboat must go five miles to collect it. The Bard advances—unsolicited—an alternative petition.

TELEGRAMS come
To the fortunate island of Rum,
But we've no such luck
On the island of Muck.

They fall like manna
On the island of Canna;
You can gather them off the peg
On the island of Eigg.

But we receive wires
Through the media of signal-fires
And the far-flung ferry-boat,
And it gets our goat.

'Twould be the absolute limit if
Methods so primitive

Were allowed to persist:
Wherefore, we pray thee, list,

O thou redoubtable lion
Of progress, Major TRYON—
Suffer us at least to own
A telephone.

We should feel in no wise glum
Were we thus made to seem Rum;
And we do ask you to chuck
Treating us like Muck.

Aid us and we shall exclaim
At sound of thy honoured name
(And we shan't be pulling your leg),
"Good Eigg! Good Eigg!" H. B.



1914—1938

Shade of the Unknown Warrior. "Qui va là?"
The King of England. "Friends of France."

July

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, July 11th.—Lords: Essential Commodities Bill given Second Reading.

Commons: Debate on Privilege.

Tuesday, July 12th.—Lords: Debate on Agriculture.

Commons: Report Stage of Finance Bill concluded.

Wednesday, July 13th.—Lords: Debate on Earlier Meeting.

Commons: Debate on Agriculture.

Monday, July 11th.—The debate on the Essential Commodities Bill, which approves the Government's policy of buying and storing large quantities of food and oil, was notable for an attack by Lord RITCHIE, who declared that the Government would fail to increase total stocks held in the country because the confidence of trading interests would be undermined by the dread that an immense amount of official reserves might suddenly be let loose on the market. He suggested that for the future traders should be assisted by the Board of Trade to increase their stocks to the full capacity of their storage accommodation. In reply Lord MUNSTER told him that the goods under discussion could not be disposed of without further legislation, and that traders could not be allowed to choose where stocks should be stored, since that raised the question of the vulnerability of different parts of the country.

During Questions the Commons had

the pleasure of hearing Mr. MCGOVERN, the lion of the I.L.P., rebuke Mr. GALLACHER, our tame Communist, for not standing up in defence of British subjects, Indians in Moscow, who had been arrested on the now ludicrously standard charge of being Trotskyist agents.

To the patent consternation of the Opposition, who had prepared a broadside for Mr. HORE-BELISHA, Mr. SPEAKER ruled at the outset of the debate on the Report of the Committee of Privileges on the SANDYS case that the SECRETARY FOR WAR's responsibility having ceased when the Court of Inquiry was set up, and his actions as a Minister being still *sub judice* under the consideration of the Select Committee, his connection with the Court of Inquiry must be out of bounds for this debate. Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, who admitted that his speech was thrown upside down, Mr. CHURCHILL and others protested, but Mr. SPEAKER was firm.

On the whole there was agreement with Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's statement that, since the Committee of Privileges had been unable to find any exact precedent on which to base a judgment, it had been forced to fall back on common sense, and the House agreed with the Report unanimously. But not before Mr. MORRISON had spoken of a flagrant defiance of the authority of Parliament, and Mr. CHURCHILL had criticised Mr. HORE-BELISHA for not appealing to the Chair for permission to stand between the Court of Inquiry and the censure it was meeting. He was reminded, however, by Sir JOHN SIMON, who wound up the debate, that Mr. HORE-BELISHA had the same reason for not intervening as Mr. SANDYS, who had already explained to the House that he was not going to speak because he was in process of giving evidence to the Select Committee.

During the debate Mr. A. P. HERBERT complained that he had been robbed of some remarks of Mr. SPEAKER's owing to the thunderous passage over the House of an advertising aeroplane.

Tuesday, July 12th.—The Opposition onslaught on the Government's farming policy opened this afternoon with a skirmish in the Lords in which Lord ADDISON declared that the P.M.'s speech at Kettering had been a frank and manly exposition of the views of the City, which had dominated British policy for fifty years and ruined the countryside. A patchwork quilt of quotas and a few subsidies could not be called a policy. Lord CRANWORTH, who had been browsing happily in the latest Socialist tract on agriculture, said the Elysian fields were a shoddy dream



PRIDE—AND PRIVILEGES

MR. HORE-BELISHA. "SO FAR THE PLAY HAS FALLEN SOMEWHAT FLAT; BUT WHAT ELSE COULD BE EXPECTED WITHOUT—AH!—THE PRINCE?"

[Owing to the SPEAKER's ruling, the SECRETARY FOR WAR took no part in Monday's debate on the Committee of Privileges' Report.]

compared with what the next Labour Government would create with the mere waving of the magic wand of nationalisation; and in reply Lord FEVERSHAM insisted that the idea of self-sufficiency for this country was an impossibility and that livestock must remain the chief end of British farming.

When the Finance Bill was taken in the Commons on Report, a number of Conservative Members did their best to persuade the CHANCELLOR of the unfairness of industrial undertakings being expected to provide effective protection for their workers against air-raids without any income-tax concession in return for their outlay. Figures were given to show that even in large factories shelters were costing over three pounds per head, but Sir JOHN SIMON remained convinced that here was a burden which must fall on everyone.

Wednesday, July 13th.—The Lords commiserated with each other this afternoon on the meagre space which the Press gave to their speeches, and Lord NEWTON, who was sure the only reason for this was that the sittings began too late in the day, urged that the Law Lords should use one of the Committee rooms so that the House might meet earlier. This revolutionary suggestion met with stern disapproval except from



TAKING THE WIND OUT OF HIS SAILS

THE SPEAKER AND MR. HERBERT MORRISON



"THERE! SEE THE RESULT OF MY RESIGNING THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE TRANSPORT BOARD!"

a few, and the LORD CHANCELLOR declared that it would be impossible for the House to sit in two places at once. A bold line was taken by Lord KILLANIN, who, speaking as a journalist, assured his comrades that if they said anything worth reporting, even at two o'clock in the morning, it would be reported.

During Questions Mr. CHAMBERLAIN told Mr. ATTLEE that a further reply, no more satisfactory than the last, had been received from Burgos about the bombing and machine-gunning of British ships. General FRANCO still denied these to be deliberate (on the face of it, an absurd prevarication). On the other hand, the Spanish Government had turned down the Burgos suggestion of making Almeria a safe port, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN informed the House; so the Spanish situation, apart from the usual communications, was at a standstill, and for the moment Sir ROBERT HODGSON was staying in London.

The debate on the Agricultural Vote was opened quietly by Mr. W. S. MORRISON, who said that, except for butter, barley and peas, and to a slight extent beef and mutton, we were pro-

ducing a larger percentage of our total requirements than we did before the War, that there had been a funda-

ment



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO

This week Mr. SPENS
Comes under our lens.
He is a legal gent
From Ashford, Kent.

mental change from arable to grassland farming, and that the National Government had brought a new measure of stability to the countryside.

But Mr. LLOYD GEORGE, who mocked the P.M. with being an inveterate townsman (can a keen fisherman be so described?) reverting to the Free Trade of his childhood, would have none of this. His main points were that the land was visibly deteriorating, that our marketing-systems were thoroughly ramshackle, and that the Government had completely forgotten all the grim lessons of the War. Our adverse balance of trade, last year £32,000,000, he described as the P.M.'s annual subscription to the Cobden Club.

Mr. BOOTHBY, who followed, admitted that if Mr. LLOYD GEORGE were Minister he would move fast, but it would be in the wrong direction. He urged better credit facilities for the farmer; and other Members warmly supported him, including Mr. TOM WILLIAMS, who assured the House that because Mr. LLOYD GEORGE had spoken from the Front Opposition Bench his views were not to be taken as necessarily those of the Labour Party.

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Rain

SOME of the newspapers were a little disheartened by the obliteration by rain of the third Test Match, but not so *The Daily Wire*, who filled their usual three pages with this sort of thing:—

RAIN RUINS TEST

EX-INTERNATIONALS' VIEWS

A spot of rain does not damp the ardour of your true cricket enthusiast, and I found a galaxy of old-time stars watching the flood from the shelter of the pavilion. "It reminds me of the downpour at Adelaide in '88," said Joe Gubbins, who played for Australia for many years, "though it does not come down with quite the same fire as it did in those days. The trouble with modern rain is that it takes its job too seriously. There is something mechanical about it, due, I fear, to the much greater publicity that rain gets nowadays. The clouds realise that the eyes of the world are upon them, and so the rain does not come down in the old happy-go-lucky spirit."

Spivvins, an ex-captain of England, had some interesting observations to make on the chemical structure of the rain.

"I have never known such a high percentage of hydrogen in Test Match rain before," he said, "though there was something approaching it in the match between Surrey and Leicestershire in 1924. Another extraordinary thing about this Manchester rain is that it appears to contain .002 per cent. of beer."

Bailey, the taciturn ex-wicketkeeper who played for Australia many years ago, was brief and to the point. "It is the wettest rain I have ever known," he said. "Test Match rain is usually much drier."

Many of the old stars held strong views about what the result would have been if play had been possible.

"If England had won the toss and play had commenced at 2.44 on Saturday," said Gilkes (former Australian fast bowler), "Australia would not have had a chance, but if play had started at 3.2 it is almost certain that the match would have ended in a tie. Then the chances began to swing in favour of Australia, and a commencement at 4.30 would have almost certainly resulted in a win for Bradman's men. The state of the pitch on Monday morning, however, brought another change in the exciting prospects of this remarkable non-match, and if play had started at noon the odds would have

been heavily in favour of England. During the day the chances dinged considerably, and the pitch-watchers could hardly restrain their excitement. By Monday evening it would have been anybody's game if anybody had been able to play."

Slosher, the great England batsman of pre-War days, took me to his home to show me his remarkable collection of Test Match rain gathered over a period of nearly forty years and containing samples of rain from every Test Match ground in the world.

"The fact that the two earlier Test

Matches of this series were rainless had made me fear that I would be unable to add to my collection," he said with a catch in his voice, "and you can imagine my joy when the first day of the third Test Match dawned muggy and wet."

Our account seems incomplete without the views of the man-in-the-street, and we endeavoured to obtain the opinion of a small man with a large moustache who had bought a 10/6 ticket for the first day. His remarks were not clearly audible, but we gathered that he thought the rain unusually pink.



"AND I SUPPOSE YOU HAVE A WIFE IN EVERY OASIS?"

At the Non-Stop Revue

"FRIVOLITÉS DE FRANCE"
(PRINCE OF WALES)

IF I were going on to the non-stop stage I think I should first spend a year perfecting a turn which cost me the very minimum of energy. An imitation of a Lull before a Storm might do, or a lecture, with demonstrations, on "Silence as an Aid to Thought"; but whatever it was it would have to allow of my sitting down the whole time. When I see artists giving group-pick-a-backs in hot weather to five or six of their friends, or dancing so fast that their feet disappear, and consider that they are doing it four or five times a day, they seem to me not to have given the thing enough thought in the beginning.

LATASHA and LAURENCE, whom I bracket with three other turns as the best in this programme, are of this kind. They are acrobatic dancers, and their range and poise mark them out as good. Their limbs swing so far beyond the normal human are that these appear to be attached to their bodies by universal joints, and yet the movements remain graceful and are distinguished by a lovely sense of timing. They are nearer ballet than the circus, and utterly tireless.

I don't know why our old friend FRAKSON is billed as doing new tricks, for as long ago as 1933 I saw him working the cards-in-the-glass and proving his uncanny power over cigarettes; but new or old, these are always worth watching. I haven't the least idea how he does either of them, but I am content to assume the existence of a magic which I can never hope to understand. He drops a large pack of cards into a very deep wineglass, and any card asked for rises slowly from the rest. This happens even when the glass is held by someone in the audience; it was impossible of course to tell if the someone was a fellow-conspirator. When the card asked for is a six and only a four appears, FRAKSON flicks it and instantly it bears the correct number of pips. In his other turn he takes lighted cigarettes out of thin air at such a rate that one can tell at a glance which of the audience are bulls of tobacco-shares, and he then puts a glowing stub

inside his mouth and breathes out smokily or smokelessly at will. He is a great little man, with a most engaging manner.

FERRARA also comes into this bracket of honour, for to put style and originality into knockabout is no small feat.



WAYNE WAXES SPORTING
MR. NAUNTON WAYNE

Dressed as a rag doll with a black stuff face, he is discovered in a suitcase by two muscular railway porters, who sling him out and try to weigh him. At first you imagine he is really a rag doll, for there is apparently not a bone in his

body and he can as easily be rolled up into a small parcel or spread out at length on a table; but the porters' roughness suddenly jolts him into life, when nothing is safe from his flailing feet. He is a master of floppiness, a king of shamblers, and that is as near as I can get to him in words.

The fourth is the Japanese juggler, MASU, who could, I fully believe, balance the whole contents of a chain-store on his head if he felt so minded. He makes rubber-balls run all over him as if they were pet mice, and finally brings them to roost on a truncheon held in his mouth.

The other turns are three Canadian acrobats called ALLAN, ALLAN and ALLAN—(ALLAN)³ would be neater—who form a sort of interlocking cantilever unit; TED and JACK EMERALD, extremely energetic tap-dancers; MARTA and MARYA, two American singing sisters who pour warmish music into a microphone; and a Cockney comedian, CHEERFUL CHARLIE CHESTER. He gives one very promising impersonation, but his matter wants firm editing and a thorough dry-cleaning.

Without exception the sketches are poor.

For a non-stop show this is generously staged, the style being French and the aim to display as much of the female body as the Censor will allow. It seems that he will now allow a good deal. To this emphasis on their persons the Chorus stand up bravely, though their dancing is a little erratic.

The main pivot on which the programme centres is Mr. BERNARD CLIFTON, who has a fine voice and a pleasantly cynical manner; I feel his talents deserve something better than syrupy balm for debilitated business-men. And as light relief we have Mr. NAUNTON WAYNE. I am among his staunch admirers, but I have to admit that here he is rather out of form, except in a commentary on cricket which ranks with his best nonsense. ERIC.

At the Play

"TWELFTH NIGHT"
(REGENT'S PARK)

THE invention of amplifiers has transformed out-of-doors acting and removed the great objection that all speaking in the open air, even when it is shouted, is singularly un-



STRANGE THINGS HAPPEN OUT EAST

BERNARD CLIFTON
MASU

LATASHA AND LAURENCE
MARTA AND MARYA

impressive by comparison with what men can do given a roof. All that is now needed is a way of warming the Park, because it is not enough for the rain to keep off. The summer months must come up to thermometer expectations if we are to sit back in the deck-chairs and surrender ourselves to distant romance. Granted reasonable warmth, no ordinary theatre can compare with the Regent's Park Theatre for the lasting satisfaction of the eye. It is not merely that by masterly lighting the trees and shrubs, in their long arc, give an extraordinary impression of really being stage scenery of superfine quality, so that we imagine they would be found to be plain wood seen from behind—it is also that the lighting and the stereoscopic depth give the figures of the actors a roundness and a clearness of definition such as figures do not enjoy when seen in front of a flat drop-scene.

Twelfth Night is a comedy which lends itself particularly to the open air. It is full of little stratagems, of subsidiary actions due to take place a little way off; and for all this business—particularly, for instance, when *Viola* and *Sir Andrew* are to fight their ridiculous duel—the great length of the open-air stage makes possible effects which the largest theatre does not allow. Perhaps it was also the exhilaration of the night air that made the louder comic characters play their parts with a superabundance of high spirits. *Sir Toby Belch's* laugh roared and crackled across Regent's Park as though to challenge the larger mammals at the other end. Mr. BYFORD always plays his rogues with gusto. He is, in consequence, most completely successful when *Sir Toby* is most completely under the influence from which his niece seeks in vain to rescue him. Mr. HOLME's *Sir Andrew* is remarkably pleased with himself. Perhaps it is not very clearly suggested why *Sir Toby* finds him a good companion. Mr. MERIVALE's *Malvolio*, with the thin long beard which is now apparently a permanent part of the character, was excellently precise and perhaps almost dangerously intelligent for a person who is in the play first and foremost as a butt.

The women are particularly well cast. Miss GLADYS COOPER acted *Olivia* quietly and clearly, with just a right admixture of defective good sense; while Miss BENT was the life

time with her easy, very graceful and beautifully clear presentation of *Viola* as a page.

It is a difficulty for producers handling well-worn favourites to know how austere to curtail the incidental business, and there are moments in *Twelfth Night*—particularly when *Sir Andrew* and *Sir Toby* are concealed to watch *Malvolio* read the decoy letter—when the business approached the dimensions of pantomime, and the conspirators played hide-and-seek round and round the bushes. They are crowded so close behind *Malvolio* that we recognise we are under the authority of theatrical convention, without which dramatists could never have survived to this day, by which people on the stage do not notice and do not overhear in the way that people do in ordinary life. But under that convention these chases and this hide-and-seek must lose their point, and if audiences laugh loud, as they tend to do at all horseplay and practical joking, it is not really the compliment or the desired effect it might seem.

Twelfth Night is a play of unusually swift movement. The sentences are pregnant, the dialogue, except in one or two places, always progressive, and it needs least perhaps of any of SHAKESPEARE's comedies any sort of padding out with business. But that is a minor criticism. In general the play's rich lines are in first-rate keeping in Regent's Park as they come out upon the night air once again to delight mankind.

D. W.



THE GLASS OF FASHION

Malvolio MR. PHILIP MERIVALE
Fabian MR. VALENTINE ROOKE
Sir Toby Belch MR. ROY BYFORD
Sir Andrew Aguecheek MR. STANFORD HOLME

and soul of the plotting and of the enjoyment of successful practical jokes, and Miss JEAN FORBES ROBERTSON compelled attention and held it all the



A PROBLEM IN TWINS

Sebastian MR. KENNETH EVANS
Olivia MISS GLADYS COOPER
Viola MISS JEAN FORBES ROBERTSON

At the Ballet

"Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo" (THEATRE ROYAL)

It is a fascinating spectacle to watch the young Company at Drury Lane that LEONIDE MASSINE has gathered around him in the newly-formed *Ballet de Monte Carlo*. The ensemble is still sufficiently new a combination to be flurried by nerves and thrilled by applause. There is nothing jaded in the attitude of the *corps de ballet* towards their classics. Watching them, the ballet-goer has that rare joy of feeling that each work is being created

anew. Their lines may—and indeed do—leave much to be desired. If there is anything detachable in the way of stage properties the ballet-goer can count on seeing it, sooner or later, strewing the path of whichever of the many stars happens to be dancing. But the romantic, the stimulating, the element of perpetual surprise is in the very weave of this Company's fabric. Their repertory is small but attractive.

Stars tumble over one another (a frequent occurrence in Ballet Russe) to lend brilliance to the rôles.

Heading the company is ALEXANDRA DANILOVA, the most perfectly-placed of modern ballerinas. The play of her wit raises her *demi-caractère* beyond its *genre*, and the excellence of her "school" outweighs her technical limitations. ALICIA MARKOVA has a special place in the heart of her London public. Her swift neat movement, her lightness, and her great gift for making the air her own particular element combine to make her the supreme classical exponent of her day. TAMARA TOUTMANOVA has been absent from England for two seasons. Her work has lost a measure of its force and assurance. But her line, her approach to her rôles, and the loveliness of her features assure her of the ballet-goer's patience until she has regained her technical mastery.

MASSINE, choreographer, and supreme stylist of the Ballet Russe, leads his Company. FREDERIC FRANKLIN, fast maturing in the forcing-frame of a Russian Company, has now become the master of his superb technique and offers it modestly in the service of his rôles.

The tally of the Company's talents is but half told. There is the joyous charm of NINA TARAKANOVA, the fine intelligence and lovely lyrical quality of NINI THEILADE, the jubilant *fouettés* of the young ROUDENKO, the fine physique of IGOR YOUSKEVITCH and the film-fame of MIA SLAWINSKA. In fact the average balletgoer might almost be forgiven for not being able to see the ballets for the stars.

The opening programme began with *Les Sylphides* and ended with *Le Beau Danube*, newly dressed in unlovely costumes by Comte ETIENNE DE BEAUMONT. It included the long-awaited choreographic interpretation of the Beethoven Symphony No. 7, with décor by CHRISTIAN BERARD.

The four movements of the symphony ballet are united by a pseudo-biblical theme. "The Creation," to the *Vivace*, is choreographically the most inventive. In the *Allegretto* movement, *Death* visits the Earth. This takes the form of a mass *funérailles*, more subtle in treatment than the corresponding

movement in *Choreartium*. Moreover it is the occasion for some lovely movement by NINI THEILADE. The *Presto* is "The Sky," and its trio serves as *entrée* for ALICIA MARKOVA. The destruction of the world by fire takes place in the *Allegro con brio*.

But a choreographer cannot build a Babylon out of a tipsy cherub and the *corps de ballet* in vine-leaves. Nor can the heat, the hiss and the crackle of fire be generated by the waving of scarlet scarves. Even a MASSINE cannot contain the heavens, the earth, and the waters under the earth in the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

As to the concert-goer, he must surely be at a loss to reconcile the naïvetés that pass before his eyes with the highly developed and manipulated sound that passes into his ears.

The complete ballet-goer, in addition to possessing a feeling for line, an ear for music and an eye for colour, is equipped, apparently, with inexhaustible lungs. The unusually enthusiastic audience gathered to take part in the first-night demonstrations used theirs in virtuosos volume. It is no small tribute to the new Company to record that the audience waited in their seats to applaud the artists long after the curtain fell.

Throughout the evening the London Symphony Orchestra played efficiently for the conductor, EFREM KURTZ.

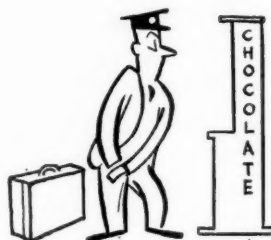
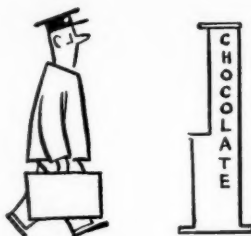
C. B.

Themselves When Young

(With acknowledgments to Miss Eiluned Lewis)

FOR a long time the children's father had set his face against having an alarm-clock in the house. There were no alarm-clocks in the Bible, he said. But later, confronted three mornings running with sausages that were scarcely more than parboiled, he relented to the extent of allowing Joe to have an hour-glass installed in his room.

It was this that woke Joe every morning at three o'clock, when he would light the fires, clean out the stables, feed the livestock, sweep the chimneys, and polish the children's shoes. He daubed the blacking on the four pairs of shoes with loving care: first the grown-up pair, with real shoe-laces, of Tommy (aged eleven), then the slightly smaller footwear of Isabel (aged nine), then the pathetic little shoes, with their built-up soles, that belonged to six-year-old Winnie, who was flat-footed, and lastly the tiny Wellingtons which were all that little



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... AND YOU EXPECT ME TO WORK!

Jimmy, then rising three, could keep on his feet.

Sometimes when Tommy had broken out during the night to make sure the rabbits were properly asleep there would be mud an inch thick on his shoes, every trace of which must be banished before morning. "That be main tarrifyin', zo 'er surely be," Joe would mutter under his breath; but there was a look of tenderness in his eyes as he plied his brushes. . . .

Ben, the gardener's boy, told them that the pond in the woods was a hundred feet deep. They used to play there sometimes when Miss Grimm, the governess, had had a tricycle accident and was not able to come. According to Isabel, the pond was inhabited by thousands of little tiny beings called Fenians, which was a name she had got out of a book. The Fenians, she said, lived in caves and never came within more than thirty feet of the surface.

One day their father, who used to recite *The Times* aloud at breakfast every day, read how the Fenians had

murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish in a place called Phoenix Park. As soon as breakfast was over, the four children held a council of war. "We must do something to punish them!" Isabel insisted. "Yes, we must!" Tommy and Winnie agreed. Even little Jimmy, though he had not the least idea what was causing all the excitement, got as far as lisping "Naughty Fenians!" once or twice.

After lessons were done that morning—it was Trigonometry and particularly dull—the children went to the pond. Their plan was made. Tying little Jimmy to the end of a long pole, they poked him down into the water, armed with the wooden sword from Tommy's soldier's outfit. "He'll make the dirty old Fenians sorry!" Tommy said.

Alas! he had not been under for more than ten minutes when Nanny came to call them in for lunch. She was not sympathetic towards their plan for a private vengeance. "The idea!" she said indignantly; and Jimmy had to be hauled up right away.

The children spent the rest of that day locked up in the nursery, and the pond was put out of bounds for a week. Isabel made up a song about it, which began—

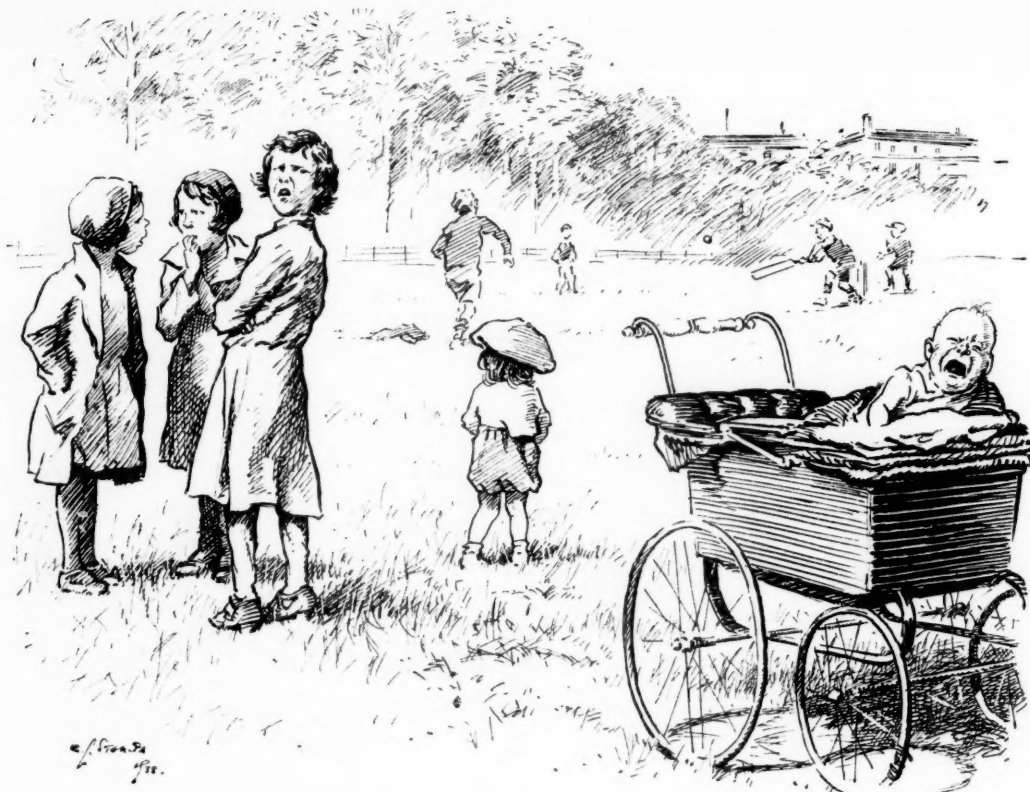
*"The Fenians came down like a funt on the fold,
And murdered Lord Frederick Cavendish for his gold."*

"What does funt mean?" Winnie asked.

"I don't know azactly," Isabel admitted; "but it's the sort of thing the Fenians are like when they're cross."

The worst of it was that, although they asked him as soon as he came to, Jimmy could not tell them anything new about the Fenians. "I said we hadn't put him in deep enough," Tommy said gloomily. . . .

On Sundays the children used to wear clean sailor-suits and sit in the family pew with their father while the Rev. Mr. Outrage, the Vicar, conducted the service. Mr. Outrage was very tall



"'ERE—'OO ARE YOU S.O.S.-IN' AT?"

and had a face the colour of a piece of stained glass. He stood pulling the solitary bell until the shooting-brake with the children and their father in it came round the corner in a cloud of dust. Then he made his way into the little church, bustling past his other parishioner, and began the voluntary.

When Jimmy had been safely parked in the vestry, the family would take their places and the service would begin. Except for the First Lesson, which was read by their father in a rolling voice, the children's favourite part of the service was always the Psalms; though it was an unflinching excitement to watch Mr. Outrage skipping nimbly from the organ-loft to the pulpit when the time came for the sermon. Once Isabel made up some words of her own to Psalm LXVII. which the children sang instead of the proper ones; but as there was no one else in church that morning they were easily found out and sent to bed without any supper. . . .

The three weeks which they spent

every summer with Aunt Pandora by the sea were easily the most exciting in the whole year. First there was all the business of packing the trunks; then they had to be taken to the station, one by one, on old Humpty's wheel-barrow; then there was the long train-ride, which made Jimmy invariably and monotonously sick; and finally that first matchless glimpse of—the sea!

"Hurrah!" the children cried (inevitably). "The sea!"

Isabel made up a song about it which she sang to the others when they were trying to get a little sleep. It ran:—

*"The sea, the sea, the lovely sea,
Is there especially for you and me.
Its waves are wumbly, huge and wet;
It must be terrifically deep, I bet."*

"What does wumbly mean?" Winnie asked sleepily.

"I don't know azactly," Isabel admitted; "but it's the sort of thing waves are."

With Aunt Pandora they used to go

hunting for cockles in the fragrant green strip of seaweed that marked the high-water line. Once Tommy found an octopus; but Isabel said it was hers, she had left one exactly there last year.

"Oooh!" cried Tommy, scandalized, "what a bunger!"

Before Aunt Pandora could interfere a fierce quarrel had broken out and Isabel was weeping unreservedly. In the end, however, they almost certainly took four legs each and were sent to bed without any supper. . . .

A water-rat was fishing from the lower branches of the elm, and not far off a kingfisher was calling incessantly. Nothing disturbed the smooth green surface of the pond save a pathetic little stream of bubbles that showed where Ben, the gardener's boy, was drowning a litter of puppies. Now and then a bat flitted past on its way to the belfry.

Isabel had insisted on their going to the pond because, she said, there was to be a big battle between the Fenians

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and the Athenians (the Armenians intervening). When they got there, however, she disclosed that the battle was over. In the uncanny stillness of the evening, they sat on rotten tree-stumps and attuned themselves to Nature's pitch. Suddenly, voicing the thoughts of all of them, Tommy spoke.

"I don't believe there are any Fenians," he said.

It was four very solemn children that walked home twenty minutes later. There was cold duck for supper that evening, and caviar and prunes and rice. Afterwards the children stayed awake long into the night, talking and planning and (in Isabel's case) reciting poetry.

Next day they were to go to school.

Rural Drama

THE production of a play with an entirely female cast is always a matter of difficulty, but in spite of this our Women's Dramatic Society decided to present a Shakespearean tragedy. We immediately went into the question of costume, and settled on the kilt first and *Macbeth* afterwards.

It is true that SHAKESPEARE performed in the courtyards of inns, but the piece of rough gravel between the horse-trough and the front steps of the "Three Swans" is now reserved for charabancs. We had to be content with a platform improvised from scaffold-boards and empty mineral-water crates in the basement of the Working-men's Billiard Club. A drapery of many coloured curtains hid the back-door, which came right in the middle of the stage and which bore a request for all and sundry to "Push Bar to Open"—an altogether unnecessary exhortation, because it proved practically impossible to keep the thing shut.

Behind the wings on the left three steps led down into the furnace-room, but on the right was a fairly spacious kitchen, with a copper, whose inverted lid served as a dressing-table.

There was no passage to connect the wings, and some players would exit by the first curtain opening that came to hand, and have to stay in hiding until the end of the scene. A murderer might start on his bloody errand with much dramatic flourish, but a bulge in a mustard-coloured curtain told everyone how far he had got.

At last we were ready for the first scene. The *Witches* were crouching in the darkness waiting until the lightning could be made to work, when the back-door suddenly opened. A blast of real air blew aside the curtain. In the back-

ground the prompter could be seen struggling with a small boy. He protested loudly that he had come to do the furnace, and the whole of the Scottish army had to file up the narrow stairs to let him go down.

The curtains fell back into place; a large tea-tray produced an immense clap of thunder, and the performance started. The boy had been forgotten in the excitement of the drama, but it was not long before we began to realise what "doing the furnace" meant. An early hint of sulphur made *Macbeth's* castle even more unhealthy than usual. Matters grew worse, and a cloud of black smoke came from the left wing just as the *King of Scotland* arrived from the kitchen. His announcement—

"This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends
itself,"

ended in a fit of coughing.

I had been given the part of *Banquo*. This was because none of our more wealthy members liked the idea of being murdered in a ditch. It was also arranged that I should double the part of the witch *Hecate*. Rehearsals were well advanced before it was noticed that I should have to appear in succeeding scenes as each character, and as both in one. In the end we relied on a wired-on beard and a quick change. To help matters further it was decided that the ghost of *Banquo* should appear at the banquet as a head only. I was to stand on a box behind the curtain and have a torch focussed

on the flour in my beard. To save time I spent what moments were left after the murderers had done with me in changing the character of that part of my person which would not show.

My first appearance was dramatic and startling, but the position was a cramped one even for a ghost, and on the second manifestation I stood too near the edge of the box. It tipped up and I was suddenly pitched into full view of the audience—a strange figure already half-way towards becoming a *Witch*. The bearded head of *Banquo* crowned, but could not hide, the more essential parts of my negligée. I dived for cover behind the nearest curtain, took a wrong turning, reappeared two curtains further on, and finally shot down the cellar stairs on top of sundry murderers and attendants who were waiting without.

These were but minor disturbances. Our production really met its Waterloo in the Pit of Acheron. Great attention had been paid to this scene. The *Witches' fire*, which consisted mainly of red crêpe paper and torch-bulbs, flickered most realistically every time a player trod on the wires. A green light illuminated the faces of the amateur hags, and in the distance a gramophone played witch-like music.

All went well until *Macbeth*, entering in the dim light, trod on a loose board in the platform. The fire and the green light went out simultaneously. The cauldron crashed and *Lady Macbeth* suddenly appeared from where she had been holding up the side of the cavern. She put her poor hands to very good use—hoisted *Macbeth* to his feet; refixed his beard and the green light. It was all done so quickly that she had no time to be surprised at the company her husband was keeping.

The brew was prepared at last, and the invocation uttered. The response was immediate and it came from the back-door. That gateway to our destruction burst open for the second time. The curtains slowly opened and in came the apparition. It wore muddy leggings, stained breeches, a red-and-white striped sweater and an old battered bowler. In its hand it carried a froth-crowned glass. This was no product of the vaporous drop from the corner of the moon, but Joe, the handyman from the "Three Swans," bringing in the billiard-marker's supper beer.

When at last the audience became quiet the gramophone could be heard coming to the end of its twelve inches of witch music, but no one had the heart to stop it. Our *Macbeth* had been done to death by a pot-boy long before he met *Macduff*.



"IS THAT YOU MAKING THE PURRING NOISE NOW, OPERATOR?"



"Now, SYLVIA, YOU REALLY CANNOT PUT OFF MAKING YOUR CHOICE BETWEEN US MUCH LONGER."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

As One Teuton to Another

MORE than twenty eminent Germans have contributed chapters to a remarkable volume—*Germany Speaks* (THORNTON BUTTERWORTH, 10/6)—which, claiming to be an authentic interpretation of a nation's aspirations, sets out to state a case at the bar of British public opinion. So frank and friendly an appeal must in itself be taken as evidence of a widespread and genuine concern for peace with understanding, for these men write not as private essayists but as high officials near the inner ring of Nazi control. They avow implicit obedience to their one Leader and almost pathetically asseverate their faith that to his genius alone is Germany's recovery due, yet it becomes clear that without their technical direction in the principal government offices the central impulse must have remained ineffective. If ever the case for a "Corporate State" could be made good it should be in these pages—plausible, persuasive, authoritative, at times even downright convincing; and it is only in a persistent undercurrent hardly realised by the writers that a contrary direction is evident. Accepting the argument for the unification of the German states under one central control, granting the existence to-day of a genuine majority for the present system, even allowing some partial justifications for a truculent foreign policy, the friendliest English reader must still stumble perpetually over the betraying phrase. The failure of the pre-revolution government "to protect the people against false doctrines," the right "to keep criticism within proper limits," the discovery that "uniform political thought is the basis of all national success," the relief schemes "for the nationally and politically dependable," the education that must "conform to the necessities of the State"—these and a hundred others indicate the price in repression that Germany is exacting from Germans.

Friends, Actors, Butterflies

Quakers, the Stage, high life—these three,
Blandly in touch or clashing hotly,
Contribute their variety
To AUDREY LUCAS's *Old Motley*,
A tale (from COLLINS) with a flow
Of pleasant folk and pleasant doings
In Town a hundred years ago—
Their creeds, their longings, trials and wooings.

Her hero, as Miss LUCAS tells,
Bred in the Quakers' stern tradition
Of hatred of the boards, rebels
And, stage-struck, follows his ambition—
And this, moreover, in an age
When those of wealth and social graces
Applauded actors on the stage
But, off it, put them in their places.

The complications which obsess
His path, thus hindered and restricted,
To famous parts and happiness
In love are charmingly depicted;
But, more deserving of our praise,
The subtle atmosphere arouses
Clear visions of the far-off days
When VESTRIS played to crowded houses.

King Monmouth

A very small and pitiful pawn in a very cruel and complicated game, *James, Duke of Monmouth* (BLES, 18/-), has perhaps accumulated more than his fair share of historical attention. Miss ELIZABETH D'OYLEY goes into his life in detail rather in the fashion of ROUSSEAU recalling his child-



"HOW STUPID OF ME! I'M ALWAYS FORGETTING THE DATE."

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NO SINECURE

Proud Mother (to the new Governess). "AND HERE IS A PENCIL, MISS GREEN, AND A NOTE-BOOK IN WHICH I WISH YOU TO WRITE DOWN ALL THE CLEVER OR REMARKABLE THINGS THE DEAR CHILDREN MAY SAY DURING YOUR WALK."

George Du Maurier, July 20th, 1878.

hood: "I know the reader does not very much want to hear all this, but I very much want to tell it him." Her ruthlessness is set off, however, by a genuine zest for research, a notable fairness in marshalling facts, and a sound distrust of the authenticity of plots—Catholic and Protestant—and of the acumen of the mobs that credited them. Her cast is largely unattractive—even the debonair CHARLES is seen at his worst, pitting his pretty Protestant bastard against his ugly Catholic brother; and the plain and pompous wife bestowed on the former at fourteen is adduced as a weighty argument in favour of his liaison with HENRIETTA WENTWORTH. For a plea equally eloquent, witness the lady's charming effigy from her battered monument at Toddington. The Sedgmoor débâcle is particularly well handled, the hurried action of that forlorn hope acting as a stimulus to a narrative inclined to be leisurely.

Among the Race-Gangs

Probably no one excels Mr. GRAHAM GREENE at making dinginess and squalor interesting to read about. He has a high regard for the drab details in the life of people who have no money, or who, having money, prefer to keep it in the soap-dish, like the principal character of *Brighton Rock* (HEINEMANN, 7/6). This is a pale young man of seventeen with no imagination, no pity, no affection for anyone at all: a cunning, puritanical, determined young gangster, handy with a razor-blade. At the beginning of the story he and his gang murder a journalist on Brighton front. Thereafter all his energies are coldly and evilly bent on covering up the crime. He murders again; he marries—though he hates the idea of marriage—a girl who remembers too much; finally he gets killed. Not a cheerful nor a pretty

story, but an absorbing one, which many will read without being worried by—without, indeed, noticing—the Good-versus-Evil symbolism which the author probably regards as the most important thing in it. The novel is no easier to put down than a good detective story, and much more memorable.

Sidelights on a Golden Calf

It was tactful and kind of Mr. JAMES HILTON to temper an autobiographical essay on education with six short stories in which his ideal composite schoolmaster, *Mr. Chips*, figures as the god in the machine. For the essay on education tends to stress the query most of us would probably voice if we were honest: Whatever equivalent benefit have we received for the cash and time spent on our own respective schools and colleges? The recollection of his particular seventeen years' hard, though pleasant enough, leaves him ready to endorse THRING of Uppingham's celebrated description of the procedure of the average schoolmaster: "The people gave me of their gold, and then I cast it into the fire, and lo! there came out this calf." Incidentally he inquires (1) why schoolmasters tend to unload old stock rather than meet sounder demands; (2) whether, under the customary twelve hours' educational shift, the average child is not far worse off than the average overworked errand-boy. The six short stories that follow handle benign old age and ardent youth with a touch of HANS ANDERSEN's imaginative felicity. Here's *To You, Mr. Chips!* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 5/-), and may we often meet again!

A Victorian Best-Seller

The Life of *Ouida* (COBDEN SANDERSON, 8/6) might have made a fascinating book, but Miss YVONNE FFRENCH, perhaps infected with her subject's inconsequence, has left her heroine, in her theatrical furs and satins, so superficially drawn, so much a thing of fantasy, that it is a little difficult to think of her as once a living woman, not as some unsuccessful figure in fiction of her own school. Miss FFRENCH's language also verges on the high-flown but, allowing for that, she sums OUIDA's character up with some justice, even if one cannot accept her conclusion as it stands: "uncompromising and unpractical, half genius and half crazy, entirely unfitted to wrestle with realities, yet equipped with an integrity of ideas that wholly compensated for her wild defects." The novelist seems to have had, in spite of great abilities, no sense of proportion and an overwhelming vanity; but her love of animals, unbalanced and foolishly displayed as it often was, will endear her to many readers of this biography.

Sub-Arctic Adventure

It is rather a reversal of the usual order of things for a maker of films to turn to the writing of books. Mr. ROBERT FLAHERTY is well-known in connection with *Nanook of the North*, *Elephant Boy* and—perhaps more than with either of these—*Man of Aran*. His first excursion into fiction and the printed page, *The Captain's Chair* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), deals with a subject not unlike that of the last-named film, a life made up of constant struggle for the bare necessities of existence with the great forces of Nature. It can hardly be called a novel. It is rather a series of episodes loosely bound together by an underlying motive, the search for *Captain Grant* and his ship. Based as it is on personal experience, it gives a vivid and unusual picture of an unusual aspect of life, and its style, unadorned almost to baldness, is singularly in keeping with the stark simplicity of man's way of living in the sub-Arctic regions and the harsh and grudging moods of Nature there.

The Egoists

The scope and range of Miss MARGERY ALLINGHAM's recent novels lift them high above the ruck of detective fiction, and this has never been more patent than in *The Fashion in Shrouds* (HEINEMANN, 8/6). Once more we meet that peculiarly unobtrusive investigator, *Albert Campion*, and his hunt after a most resourceful murderer is conducted with an admirable lack of fuss and fustian. But what gives signal distinction to this story is the careful attention paid to characterisation. The portrait of *Georgia Wells* is thoroughly worthy to be hung in the ALLINGHAM gallery, and her duels with *Campion's* sister were fought with weapons all the more deadly because they were concealed under endless endearments. This tale is a welcome successor to those admirable stories, *Flowers for the Judge* and *Dancers in Mourning*.

A Stern Chase

When *Archie Lumsden* agreed to impersonate a member of our Secret Service he started upon a whirl of adventure which Mr. MAX SALTMARSH describes with indefatigable zest in *Indigo Death* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 7/6). But after *Lumsden* had arrived in Germany and had got closely in touch with plotters and schemers, the hunt is conducted at such a terrific pace and with such sudden changes of fortune that it is difficult to follow without confusion. Here, in fact, is a writer whose armoury is so fully equipped with scares and surprises that he can afford to be more economical in his use of them.



"... UNTIL FINALLY ONLY ONE OF US WAS LEFT."

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Charivaria

WE are told that shoplifting is on the increase. Many firms are said to be feeling the pinch.

★ ★ ★

Real Life Story

"Will exchange lady's 18-ct. gold ring, milled edges, diamond set in heart, for small bore double-barrelled shot-gun."
Exchange and Mart.

★ ★ ★

Samples of mud with curative properties have been sent from this country to Sydney for Australian experts to study. None of them however comes from Old Trafford.

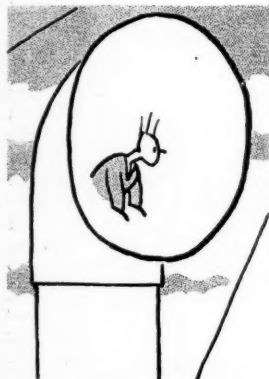
★ ★ ★

"LAMPS WAITING FOR SOMETHING."
Sussex Paper.

Well, that's better than waiting for nuffin.

★ ★ ★

"The landlord objects to my wireless aerial, but I'm going to hang on to it," said a man in court the other day. That ought to satisfy the landlord, anyhow.



★ ★ ★

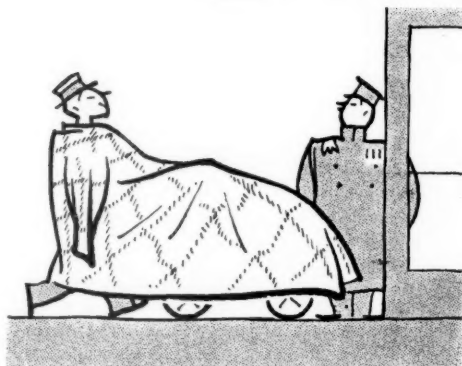
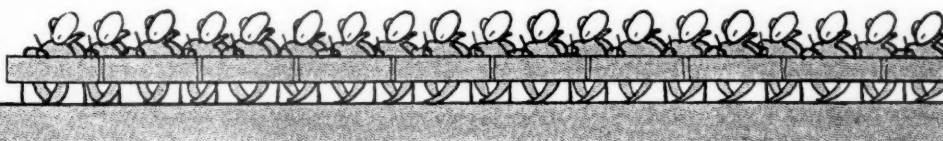
It is pointed out that there are comparatively few cases nowadays of passengers being lost overboard from crack liners. It is now of course so much easier to get lost in-board.

★ ★ ★

A gossip writer says that when he arrived at a cocktail party there were only teetotal cocktails left. Other gossip writers had presumably been more punctual.

★ ★ ★

A Hollywood film actress told a judge that the man she married two years ago was not the man she thought he was. Film stars should examine their husbands before leaving the counter.



daily in the summer. their mouths shut?

A famous conjurer says that he enjoys performing his feats in the intimate atmosphere of a smoking-concert. It is naturally easier for him to make his assistants disappear into thick air.

★ ★ ★

"Red Admirals are very fond of over-ripe plums."—*News Chronicle.*
Hence the complexion.

★ ★ ★

A scientist points out that the sea loses thousands of tons of water When will swimmers learn to keep

★ ★ ★

No More Room On Top ?

"Judge W. J. Browne leaves to-day to spend his vacation at the bottom of Placentia Bay."—*Newfoundland Paper.*

★ ★ ★

A new sort of gramophone record, it is claimed, can be struck with a 15-pound hammer without hurt. A 16-pound hammer appears to be the only way out.

★ ★ ★

A municipal architect has been urging the erection of more ornamental lamp-posts in our cities. Many people, however, are quite content to cling to the old type.

★ ★ ★

When bandits entered a provincial theatre in Mexico and robbed patrons in the stalls they were assisted by friends from the gallery. So the gods still help those who help themselves.



★ ★ ★

Dr. G. F. MORTON, Headmaster of Leeds Modern School, says that public schools to-day are producing a mass mind. Little boys should be seen and not herd.

To Anyone Twenty Years Old

You are young; but the wheel of Time advances,
And this is the thing that fascinates me,
Taking the common count of chances
You are pretty well sure to see,
Like a cage that has lost a singing linnet
Like a rudderless wreck by the tempest hurled,
Europe without any HITLER in it
A post-MUSSOLINI world.

I could wish, of course, they might live for ever
And no historian's shaky pen
Might trace the end of the vast endeavour
Of these remarkable men.
But an hour must come when the prophet's vesture
Falls at last from the fiery car
And another must soothe the earth with a gesture
Or give it a nasty jar.

Oh, will there be any shine or thunder
Or any voice like theirs on the mike?
I cannot refrain from a passing wonder
On what it will all be like
When these go out through the shadowy portals
And whether the Armament Race will cease
And if we shall find two following mortals
To fight, as they fought, for peace. EVOE.



"VEAL'S OFF, SIR; CHOPS IS OFF, AND, UNLESS MY NOSE DECEIVES ME, DUCK'S OFF TOO."

William Weathers the Storm

DEAR GEORGE,—Preparations for the nuptials are more and more afoot although since my last letter I nearly got disengaged.

It happened like this. The other day I said Lucy we always seem to be at your house, I have nothing against your Mother and Father but I move we commune with nature for once viz go for a picnic via bus. Carried unanimously she said.

On Sunday she said before we go I have got something up my sleeve to show you, it is only a short walk. When we got there a man said we meet again Madam congratulations Sir, this is our show modern Tudor Palace with combined sitting room and dining ditto, a bathroom which. Me being in that line I said, your remarks would be coals to Newcastle upon Tyne, that is a nice place over there. That is one we have not put the architecture on yet he said, due to being short of long nails. I am not keen on the Tudor touch I said, not wishing to live in an anacronism, come Lucy. I will pop home for the samwiches she said, subdued.

While I was waiting who comes up but Ivy, one of my extinguished flames and said I have not seen you since I do not know when, how is the world treating you? Very seldom if at all I said but she didnt smile and said oh Willy boy if things were the same again they would be different. Opportunity only knocks once Ivy I said. Then up comes Lucy and says sorry to intrude I am sure, I thought it was me you were waiting for or is this an aunt of yours William? Aunt my foot Ivy said, who nursed him through flu? and pranced off.

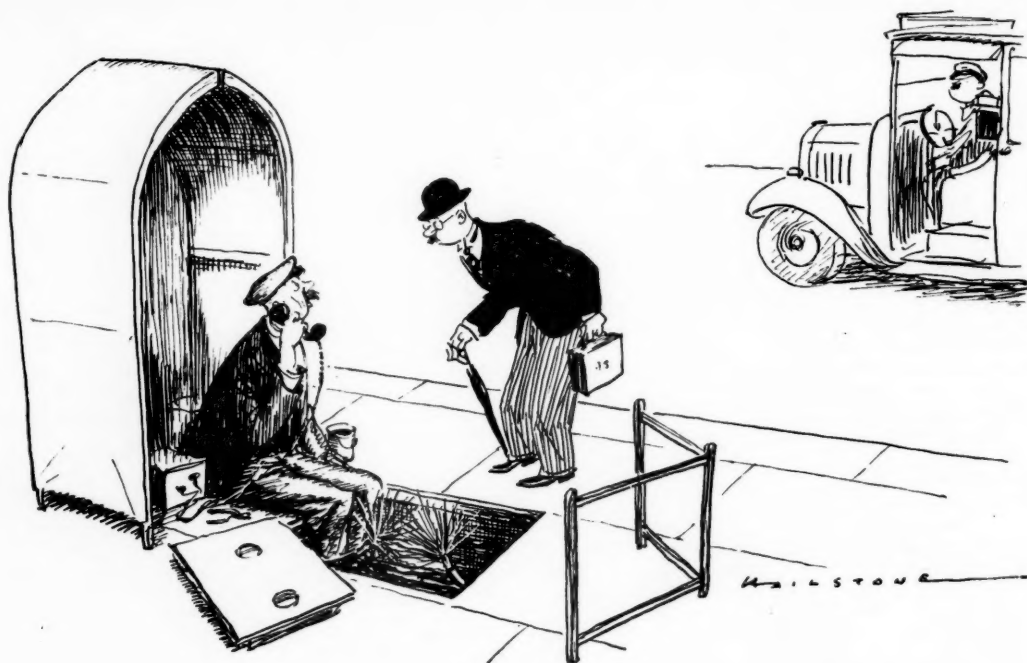
I seem to have uprooted a pretty kettle of fish Lucy said, who is this blonde, did she nurse you? Her untampered with hair is dark fawn I said, when I had flu she brought me three oranges and a few grapes all of which she ate herself, that is her in a nutshell. If you want to relight the old flame Lucy said, dont mind me I am only your betrothed. Wont you kiss and make up? I said. You want Ivy for that she said, I should say she is pretty liberal with both, here is a Hampton Court bus hop on, I never thought when I saw the film it would happen to me. Explain do I said. Greta Garbo in a film with Napoleon she said, she gave up everything for him and didnt nag when he came a cropper at Waterloo and after all she did he went to live on a island with his Mother and she was left with nothing but her memories and a little American boy.

Your logic is incredulous I said, leave Miss Garbo be, she is very nice and has done you no harm. Oh she said, I suppose you are gone on her too, go ahead, marry Greta Garbo then. I wouldnt want two artistic temperaments in the family I said, besides I think she has already got a fellow although that wouldnt stop me if I was keen, I am closing down now pro tem.

We sat and looked at a mans neck until the conductor said hay you two this is it. We sat in the grounds and she said if silence is gold you must be making quite a pile, what are you thinking of? Nothing particular I said, thoughts are drifting through my mind but they are not fit to use. If that is your frame of mind she said, here is your ring back here is your ring back here is your ow. I heard you the first time I said, why the oratorio? My finger has swole she said, I am tugging away. Allow me I said. I never thought she said, I would live to see the day a fellow I was engaged to offer to take the ring off of my finger for me to give it him back, here are half the ham samwiches.



HOMELESS: A PROBLEM FOR EUROPE



"IS BRADMAN OUT YET?"

if you will kindly lend me sevenpence for my bus fare I will go out of your life never to return, good-bye.

I let her go thinking she would return ere long but no so I went to the maze and asked the man to call her out if in. Is Lucy there? he said, if so kindly answer but all that happened was a girl said no I am Minnie and she is Alice. To the gate keeper I said did you per chance see a young lady in a brown coat with a half packet of ham samwiches in her hand pass this way? There was a young lady went through the exit out in a brown coat he said, but I was not close enough to see if the samwiches was ham, anything wrong? Ha I said and went.

Next evening I went to her house and said Lucy this must stop, to day I renoverated the pipes of a important client and it worked out so the hot tap was cold and the cold hot and when they emptied the wash basin the bath filled, my career is in jeopardy. It is Mothers fault she said, I called back for the samwiches yesterday and told her you werent struck on the house and she said make him think you dont really care but I see now I didnt ought to have done it. Lucy I said, whether you ought to have done it or whether you didnt ought to have done it you done it and all but broke me up. I have told Mother where she gets off she said, and when we are married I wont go home to her like other girls do. Dont promise anything now I might regret later I said.

Then her Mother came in and said I only wanted to see her happy and cried. Excuse the wife being weepy her Father said, it is due to me being a sailor once, she used to weep when I left and every sailor she saw reminded her of me and made her weep worse, we lived at Portsmouth then so she was perpetually emoted, it is habit now she

cries involuntary whenever she sees a strange face. Father Lucy said, he may be no Robert Taylor but still. I meant nothing derogatory her Father said, I was only using his face to drive my point home with which is that your Mother is a good wife but a poor advert.

Then Lucy said ooh William I saw the housing man to day, we can have a Tudor Palace on three months appro and if you still think it what you said he will take the Tudor off and leave it just a untrimmed house. So be it Lucy I said, but remember that if there is one thing a fellow likes a girl to do it is not to do the things he does not like her to, it is the little things that make history like Cleopatras nose, oh revoor.

Well George this taming of the shrewd is all a business isnt it? I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Your idea of Lucy and me leaving the church under an archway of blowlamps appeals to me but Lucy thinks the spats will give enough colour. However if anything happens to the spats I will remember we have the blowlamps to fall back on.

"Mr. Westphal warned the delegates not to make the mistake of imagining that Fascism could never come to Britain. 'People who live in slum conditions,' he said, 'do not appreciate liberty because they have never had it. Distress creates Fascism, because when people are discontented they want a change at all costs, and Fascism offers change.'—*Scottish Paper*.

It seems to be getting some, too.

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Interlude at Lucerne

"THERE is nothing in the world," Cousin Florence said, standing in the middle of Lucerne, "worse than trying to find presents to take home from abroad."

I could have answered that one worse thing was trying to help others who were trying to find presents to take home from abroad.

But instead I just said—and the words by this time seemed extraordinarily familiar—

"Well, Cousin Florence, what about an embroidered tea-cloth, or a set of table-mats with Alpine flowers?"

"Not for poor Ernest, dear."

"Then a Swiss carving."

We looked at the shop window that we had already looked at fourteen times that morning—or else it was another one exactly like it.

"A *châlet*, a bear, a St. Bernard dog, or a little wooden boot," said Cousin Florence, looking through her lorgnette at each in turn.

I said, though more to myself than to her, that I thought one might make some kind of a little *revue* number out of that.

"A *châlet*, a bear, or a little wooden boot" seemed to me quite a good line. The next line did not not immediately crystallise, but *shoot* might bring in WILLIAM TELL, or *root* could have some connection with the edelweiss.

Then Cousin Florence said that she didn't think a cuckoo-clock would be at all easy to pack, and as I didn't think so either, we again reached a dead-end.

Then, so as not to seem uninterested, I said that a musical-box wouldn't really amuse Uncle Ernest, and anyway, there'd be a heavy duty to pay and it wouldn't be easy to smuggle, and Cousin Florence agreed with me absolutely.

The whole atmosphere was one of such despondency after that that I found myself humming, to a rather fascinating little lilting air that seemed to come to me of itself—

"A *châlet*, a bear, or a little wooden boot" all over again.

"Look, dear," said Cousin Florence, "there are some carved cigarette-boxes."

"Rather like the ones in that shop in Regent Street," I carelessly replied.

Naturally, after that Cousin Florence wouldn't for a moment consider getting a carved cigarette-box in Lucerne when Regent Street was full of them.

And quite soon we found ourselves in one of the shops where the embroi-

deries were, and, Uncle Ernest having been shelved for the moment, Cousin Florence was looking at table-mats with Alpine flowers on them, and embroidered tray-cloths, and handkerchiefs that always seemed to be marked with either C or M, and no other initials whatever. And she was saying that she wanted *un petit cadeau pour une demoiselle*.

"Why, sure," replied the young Swiss behind the counter, and she immediately showed Cousin Florence a card on which were pinned four coloured wooden brooches—two daisies, a dancing bear, a dog's head, and a life-size edelweiss.

"Have you any handkerchiefs?" said Cousin Florence, and the girl, not mentioning that we were all standing waist-deep in handkerchiefs, with handkerchiefs hanging on every side, and handkerchiefs spread six-deep on every counter, at once produced five hundred more from boxes. And I tried to think which of Cousin Florence's dear ones had names beginning with either C or M and could only remember Catherine, who spells her name Katherine, and Marian, always called Jane.

"I don't think handkerchiefs are really a very good idea," said Cousin Florence at this point.

"We have some cute little powder-

compacts," the young Swiss suggested, out of a sea of handkerchiefs.

"Do you think a powder-compact would be nice?" Cousin Florence asked, having temporarily failed to realise that powder-compacts, like carved cigarette-boxes, could almost certainly be found in Regent Street.

Stifling an almost irresistible desire to reply with a fresh rendering of "A *châlet*, a bear, or a little wooden boot" I said that a powder-compact seemed to me splendid.

"I suppose she's sure to use one, isn't she?"

"Who, Cousin Florence?"

"This friend of poor Adelaide's, dear. Poor Adelaide asked me to choose one or two presents for her to give to a friend who used to be very fond of Switzerland many years ago and is now a confirmed invalid."

"Then, Cousin Florence, am I helping you to choose presents for the friend of a friend, as well as your own friends?"

Cousin Florence, toying with a little linen bag that had the word *Engelberg* embroidered on it in a circle of Alpine roses, absently agreed that this was so.

I walked quietly away into the torrents of summer rain outside, humming as I went—

"A *châlet*, a bear, or a little wooden boot." E. M. D.



"WHAT'S THIS ABOUT NOT LETTING MR. FOSDICK WORK THE LIFT?"

Misleading Cases

The Price of Justice

*Hogby E. A. v. Hogby W. M.
(Before Mr. Justice Plush)*

HIS Lordship to-day delivered an important judgment on the meaning of Magna Carta. He said:

"There is not much left of the Great Charter to-day, and what remains is little known to most of the King's subjects, who in these times appear to be more interested in the liberties of Letts, Germans and Czecho-Slovakians than in their own. But members of the legal profession at least still dwell with reverence and contentment on Chapter 29 of Magna Carta. Many a tired judge or gentleman of the long robe falls decorously to sleep at last with this much-loved enactment under his pillow and in his mind the unforgettable promise of 700 years ago:—

'To no man will we sell, to no man deny, to no man delay, justice or right.'

'To no man will we sell justice . . .' It is not to be supposed that the enlightened monarch who set his hand to these words had in his mind to diminish or destroy the meagre remuneration of the legal profession. Barristers and solicitors—and even, I suppose, judges—are as well entitled as others to keep body and soul alive by selling their services and learning to the people. Moreover, like the medical profession, they give much free advice and service to the poor without much gratitude or even acknowledgment from the public.

"No, the meaning of the Monarch, I think, is plain. King John undertook, for his heirs and assigns, that the Crown would not sell justice, that is, that neither the possession of wealth nor the readiness to bribe should be a necessary passport into the Royal Courts of Justice.

"This case, not for the first time, reveals how very far we have fallen to-day below the lofty ideals and undertakings of King John. Mr. Hogby has been successful in a law-suit, but he has been required to pay the costs of the unsuccessful party. This at first sight shocking statement is easily explained. The suit was a divorce-suit; he is a husband; the other party was his wife: and by a bizarre tradition in this department of justice a husband, innocent or guilty, victorious or not, must always pay the costs of his wife, though the action be erroneously originated by her. This is called the Equality of the Sexes.

"To that queer point I shall reluctantly return.

"Now, of the costs in question here, some represented the modest fees of barristers and solicitors, some the expenses of witnesses (on both sides), and some the necessary out-of-pocket charges incurred by solicitors in the ordinary conduct of a case. To none of these could Mr. Hogby make reasonable objection, except that under a system of genuine justice they would be paid by his wife, who brought against him a charge of cruelty and was unable to sustain it to the satisfaction of the Court.

"But there was also a minor, though, to Mr. Hogby at least, a substantial charge for what are called Court fees. These are the very numerous fixed fees charged by the Crown at various stages of a suit at law. For example, on the filing of each affidavit there is a charge of 2/6d, and upon each swearing another half-crown. Here in the list before me is 'Alimony; application for appointment (each hour or part thereof), 10 shillings. Setting down cause (where no appearance entered), £4 10 0; (where appearance entered), £4 12 6. Appeal to Court of Appeal, filing notice and entering, £7; notice of entering, £3; and so on. At every preliminary stage of the dispute money passes to the Crown: and when at last the litigant is admitted to the Temple of Justice, he is charged by the hour for the time that he spends there. 'Hearing, or trial, of cause—first five hours £2' (or eight shillings an hour), 'and for each additional complete hour, 10 shillings.'

"It was well said in the House of Commons recently that, if the Crown must charge for the use of a court of justice, at least the fee should be like the fee for postage: that is to say, it should be the same, however long the journey may be. For it is no fault of one litigant that his plea to the King's judges raises questions more difficult to determine than another's, and will require a longer hearing in court. He is asking for justice, not renting house-property.

"Well, if all this is not selling justice, I do not know what is. In the ordinary course, it is true, the party who loses will have to meet these charges, upon the theory that he deserves to pay for taking the time of the Court with a plea now proved to be wrong. But can even this be defended as equitable? He was not to know that he was wrong; and even now it is not certain that he was wrong. For the Court of Appeal might say that he was right. Only the House of Lords can say with certitude and finality that he is wrong; and few of the King's subjects can afford to ask

them. Right or wrong, he is entitled to ask for justice (unless he is a frivolous or vexatious litigant, when there are effective ways of dealing with him); and the Crown ought not to make it more difficult for him to obtain justice by charging fees for it.

"I will go further. I hold that the Crown not merely ought not, but is unable, to act in this way, by reason of the passage in the Great Charter which I have quoted. The Rules of Court, then, which purport to impose these charges are *ultra vires*, unconstitutional, and of no effect: and Mr. Hogby may lawfully decline to pay them.

"That, however, does not dispose of his difficulties. There remain the other costs which I have mentioned. These amount to a much larger sum; and they are much larger than they should be in a country which prides itself on its administration of justice. This, again, is the fault not of Parliament but the Crown.

Mr. Hogby resides in a town in Yorkshire. This is an Assize Town—that is to say, it is visited from time to time by two of His Majesty's Judges for the purpose of delivering justice there. If Mr. Hogby had been sued for fraud, for libel, for embezzlement, or for breach of promise, the case could have been heard there, near his own home. But it was a suit for divorce. Now the only divorce-cases that can be heard at Assize Courts (and not at all of them) are (a) undefended cases and (b) Poor Persons cases, defended or not. Mr. Hogby, though poor (he is a school-teacher), is not poor enough to qualify for free legal assistance as a Poor Person. Therefore, if he defends the case, he must travel to the High Court in London, and suffer all the additional expense that that involves.

"He must pay not only his own solicitor in Yorkshire but in addition an agent in London—not to mention his wife's solicitor and agent. He must pay for the transport to London, and their accommodation there, not only of his own witnesses but his wife's. He must leave his home, and occupation, for two or three days, for there will be no certainty that his case will be called immediately after his arrival. While they are waiting, though he and his witnesses may be content with a modest hotel and reasonable cuisine, his wife, who knows that she has not to pay, and *ex hypothesi* is not at present well-disposed towards him, has no reason to stint her comfort or that of her witnesses.

"Mr. Hogby, he tells us, had saved little, and he was appalled by the prospect of such expenditure. One way out

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was to allow his wife's case to succeed by default. It would then be heard in his own town as an undefended suit at comparatively small expense. He would be divorced, but not bankrupt. Many men, it is believed, confronted with the same dilemma, have taken that course.

"But Mr. Hogby is a school-teacher. If he were to make no answer to a charge of marital cruelty, and for that suffer divorce, he would, he was persuaded, no longer be permitted by the Education Authority to have the care and teaching of children. Accordingly he fought the case, and, necessarily, in London. He won. The charges against him were struck out. He is not divorced; but he is, to all intents and purposes, bankrupt.

"I am now asked to issue a judgment summons against him for the outstanding costs of this unfortunate affair; and, if he does not pay, I suppose that he will go to prison. Two questions will leap at once to the mind of the humane observer—(1) for what good reason am I requested to condemn and punish the husband who was successful in his appeal for justice instead of the wife, who was not? and (2) for what reason could not this comparatively simple case have been heard by one of the King's judges in Yorkshire, where the costs and inconveniences of Mr. Hogby would have been considerably less?

"It is not for me to furnish reasonable answers, if such can be found. It is vain, if it were seemly, to blame Parliament in this affair, for Parliament, I believe, in both cases, has already entrusted the necessary powers to the proper authorities. The remedy, if any, is in the hands of the administration—in other words, of the Crown. All kinds of profound and mystical arguments are used, I know, for the retention of the present system. Since I am dealing with the Crown, which in this case means the learned and illustrious heads of the profession which I adorn, I must not, and shall not, attempt to meet those arguments.

"But here is Mr. Hogby, who declines for one reason or another, to pay these costs; and, for one reason or another, I am bound to say that in my opinion he is damn well right."

A. P. H.

What It Looks As.

"The Daily Telegraph says 'It certainly looks as the Prime Minister's plea for the Government's efforts to promote international understanding and to avert the danger of war has fallen from appreciative ears.'—*Singapore Paper.*



"WELL, ROBERT, WHAT DID THE DUCHESS SAY WHEN YOU GAVE HER THE FLOWERS?"

"SHE DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING. I DON'T THINK SHE KNEW IT WAS ME."

The Curse of Adam

Oh, may slugworms and snails
With their glutinous trails,
Flea beetles, thrips, ants,
All beleaguer your plants;
May greenfly in billions
And mildew oppress
The roses you grow
With such hateful success!

May groundsel and sorrel
For precedence quarrel,
And daisies like snow
On your tennis-court grow.

May all your prim fruit-trees
Be puckered with blight,
And moles on your lawn
Quarry deep through the night!

May mealybugs mangle
And strong vetches strangle,
May woodlice affright you,
And centipedes bite you;
May earwigs attack you
And nest in your ears
Till you bring back my mower,
My roller, my shears!

• At the Pictures

FOUR MEN AND A PROFESSOR.

NEARLY everybody would like to be Falsely Accused—in theory. Whenever you see a business man putting an unusually bold face on it in front of his shaving-mirror, the chances are that he is imagining himself in the dock facing a Trumped-Up Charge. CLIVE BROOK had all the expressions just right in *Action for Slander*, if you remember. But of course the rules of the game are that you clear yourself triumphantly in the last chapter; nobody wants to go on being falsely accused right up to the scaffold and after it. So that when *Colonel Leigh*, or C. AUBREY SMITH, is murdered early on in *Four Men and a Prayer* before he has had a chance to prove that he was Falsely Cashiered on the North-West Frontier, the audience is properly indignant. We are solidly behind the Colonel's four sons in their determination to track down the killer and clear Dad's name.

Of these four, *Wyatt* is a barrister, *Chris* in the R.A.F., *Geoff* at the British Embassy in Washington and *Rodney* at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he rows (Hollywood thinks that all nice young English undergraduates row—a glaring error). Well, it ought to be pretty clear how the story goes after that. Naturally the diplomat unearths the conspirators, the 'airman follows their car across country, the undergraduate—well, the undergraduate rounds up the lads in his fraternity at Magdalen and beats up the gang, and the barrister puts the kybosh on them at the end in a trial scene of astonishing intensity. That, I think, is how one has a right to expect it to go.

Is it to the credit of the makers of this film that nothing of the kind happens at all? It might be if there was anything better in its place. But there isn't. What does happen is so profoundly silly and so confoundedly difficult to follow that I don't propose to unravel it. The brothers go hither and thither—India, Buenos Aires, Alexandria, Buckingham Palace—pursued by Loretta Young and exhibiting at all times a typically English insouciance in the face of danger. No expense has been spared to provide a thoroughly English atmosphere. Just watch the white-haired old retainer in

the *Leigh* mansion carrying a tea-tray about, and listen to *Rodney* asking *Chris* (by phone from India to Buenos Aires) if he's heard the result of the Cricket Final. And the high spirits of those four boys when they get together!



NOT THE LAMBETH WALK

Chris . DAVID NIVEN *Wyatt* . GEORGE SANDERS
Geoff . RICHARD GREENE *Rod* . . WILLIAM HENRY

RICHARD GREENE, said to be a new boy wonder, is all right as *Geoff*, LORETTA YOUNG is of course decorative, and DAVID NIVEN (*Chris*) reveals a



SUSPECTED ANCESTRY

Professor Dean Lambert . . HAROLD LLOYD

certain sense of comedy—but, oh dear, oh dear!

Students of HAROLD LLOYD will remember a film (was it *For Heaven's Sake*?) in which he managed to collect a congregation for a Mission Hall by insulting every tough man he came across and then running for his life. The same idea, with a different objective, is used at the end of *Professor, Beware!* and it is still extremely funny. There is a grand fight too, as there was in *Speedy*, and one of those fearful high-speed drives through traffic which HAROLD LLOYD seems to enjoy. In fact the film is a kind of hotch-potch of the high lights of earlier successes, with a story of a rather unnecessarily complicated kind to hold it together. Briefly, *Professor Lambert* is an Egyptologist, who is led to believe that he is a re-incarnation of an ancient Egyptian who, according to the Professor's tablets, was buried alive. This worries him a lot, until the girl in the case (pleasantly played by PHYLLIS WELCH) causes a bogus tablet to be discovered which relates that the Egyptian was eventually rescued, indeed could not die. HAROLD is of course immediately transformed from a coward to a hero, just as he was transformed in *Grandma's Boy* by the belief that an old umbrella handle was a magic charm.

It does not seem to me to matter in the least that a funny film is a re-hash from start to finish, provided it is funny. *Professor, Beware!* is certainly worth seeing. There are dullish bits, but one forgets them. What one remembers is a great scene on top of a goods train, with HAROLD running as only he can run, and some terrific moments in a car, when he has a stolen hen under his coat and is obliged to pretend that he is a farm-yard imitator to account for the unusual noises. And of course there is the final riotous affray.

RAYMOND WALBURN and LIONEL STANDER give excellent support in the kind of good stock character parts always to be found in a HAROLD LLOYD film. The Plaza is certainly the place to go to for a laugh—now that *Trouble in Paradise* and *Monkey Business* at the Carlton have been succeeded by *The Sheik*. H. F. E.

"DON'T AS NEW B.B.C. CHIEF."
Daily Mail.

What about a job for HAMMOND?

Glimpses of Old Camden Town

A Fitzmeyer Touristattle

In a quiet secluded backwater of old London, England, cut off from the hustle and bustle of the mighty metropolis by the vast wooded wastes of Regent's Park to the west and Hampstead Heath to the north, lies the quaint little hamlet of Camden Town.

We are surprised at first to find ourselves in a thoroughfare so modern and majestic, with its great theatres and mighty film palaces, its stores bearing names—Lyons, Woolworths, Sainsburys—which are famous all over London, and indeed throughout the whole of England; but behind this brave façade lies the real Camden Town that we have come to see—a community where life goes on to-day exactly as it was lived thirty and even forty years ago.

Here, for example, in picturesque Inverness Street, you will see the same men, pitching the same stalls in the same spot, selling the same fish to the same old women that you would have seen in the old days before the trolley-bus came with its civilizing influence and the yellow beacons, symbol of the decline of democracy, were erected on the pavements. Sometimes you will see, in his quaint old-world uniform, a quaint old-world policeman, who stops at a barrow and urges its picturesque owner to "Move on along, please"—for the London policeman, or "bobby," as they are amusingly nicknamed, knows that no great fortunes will be founded at the corner of Inverness Street and Chalk Farm Road, and, true to his world-wide reputation for helpfulness and courtly charm, he endeavours to pass on his knowledge to those for whose safety and well-being he is responsible. But the men of Camden Town are a conservative, home-loving breed, and though the man with the barrow may seem to move on while the guardian of the law stands and watches him, it is probable that he will stop again as soon as that vigilant eye is turned in another direction.

Many of the ancient crafts practised by the inhabitants of this little community have been handed down from father to son over a period of many generations. This young lad outside the quaint old-world subway station is selling newspapers; he is the son and the grandson of men who sold newspapers outside of this very station. Stores such as those which line this colourful little street remain in the same family for many years, and the

names of Smith, Brown, Jones, Cohen and Robinson above them are the very names that were bandied about among their forebears when the famous Queen Victoria still sat on her throne in mighty Buckingham Palace.

Let us pause for a moment to look at this row of grim, grey dwellings, for, dull as they may seem to the casual eye, houses such as these are linked up with some of the most famous pages in Camden Town history. It was here, in nineteen hundred and eight, that Joe Crockett, the great Camden Town liberator, conceived and executed his daring plan whereby all the houses in his street were numbered from the same end, instead of having the even numbers numbered from one end, and the odd numbers from the other. This sweeping reform is still remembered with gratitude by the quaint old-world postmen of Camden Town as they make their busy way from house to house with letters for the inhabitants.

Just around the corner is the sordid lodging where Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud, the fairest flowers of France's literary fame, made their home on the occasion of their flight into England from the pitiless guns of the Commune.

But fascinating as these little byways are, we find ourselves always irresistibly drawn to that majestic thoroughfare of Camden Town High Street, wherein ceaselessly pulses the mighty torrent of traffic from historic King's Cross and Kentish Town. The scene, as these colourful folk go about their picturesque business, is one that stamps itself indelibly on the memory.

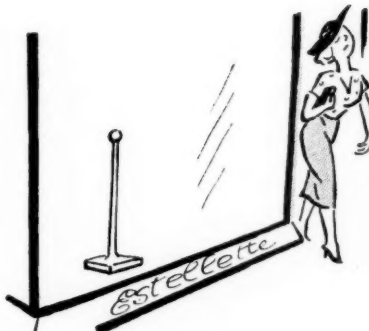
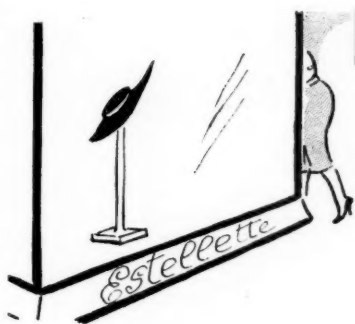
But evening is drawing in, the quaint old-world street-lamps send their cheering rays through the dark streets, and we must drag ourselves away from the innumerable vistas of enchanting colour and never-ending variety with which we have been regaled so liberally.

And so, as the sun sets behind the grey roofs of distant Islington, we bid farewell to picturesque Camden Town, now preparing for its brief interlude of rest until the first motor-horns of morning summon it once more to resume the even tenor of its fascinating and colourful existence.

That Tactless Young Reporter Again

"Mrs. —, aged 40, of —, was crossing Virginia Street when the horse, left unattended, took fright and bolted."

Liverpool Echo.



51665



"No, NOT THE MOORS THIS TIME, MRS. BROWN."

enough: "Sensational, with strong love interest; industrial setting," then he complicates the whole matter by imposing the restriction, paralysing in this context: "No sex questions." These tales of a strong man's struggle to win the love of his sliding, surfacing and screw-cutting lathe, or of a girl's devotion in spite of all odds to her patent automatic bottling and labelling machine, must be difficult to write, though when written no doubt worth reading.

But on the whole the British editor, however rigid his prejudices may be in practice, seems to shrink from defining them narrowly in print. In contrast, *Shadow*, of New York, in a passage remarkable for its verbal beauty as for its fine austerity, gives the author his exact lines. "Our pages do not show how crime is done but how it is uncovered. Detectives or police officials may be the heroes; the villain must always be a crook. We keep away from crooked police officials; are not interested in stories of gangsters. What we want are stories of clever detective work done by officials who are not afraid to risk their lives in the performance of their duties." This is more than a declaration of taste: it is a statement of faith. To what extent a description

of detective work must suffer in clarity from a refusal to deal with the details of the crime it is difficult to assess; but whatever the sacrifice it cannot be too great for an editor so admirably correct and exclusive in his attitude towards crooked police officers.

The Whisperer, also of New York, to take another example, is less fussy about the integrity of its police officers, but it insists that they must be "good and rough and give the reader plenty of action and interest." *Black Mask*, equally open-minded about policemen, stipulates that its clean, well-written crime detective stories must "begin with action, proceed with swift movement throughout and with some appealing likeable character to relieve the inevitable sordidness of all-crime atmosphere."

To touch upon another aspect of New York, *College Life* warns the reader and writer alike of stirring narratives of the Senior Common Room that its pages are not for them, its theme being the "swift-moving, realistic short story of adolescent love with collegiate background." *Love and Romance*, taking a similar line, deals with it more earnestly, I imagine. "Stories in the first person of love and romance told by either men or women

simply and sincerely and full of beauty and magic." A caution that may seem exaggerated dictates the warning: "Names, characters and locations should be fictitious."

In all this we see and should admire a system of provision for the comfort and the tastes of the reader, a recognition that the reader is entitled to dictate his preferences. Against it it may be argued that those who live the larger life must take the world in a wider view; must read not merely to indulge a base and petty passion for tales with a cowboy slant or hard-hitting stories of the ring, but in order to improve themselves and the world. There are also some nineteen other reasons for not living the larger life, some of them even better.

For Your Notebook

"Speed of drying is primarily dependent upon the rate of removal of moisture from the timber."

Manchester Guardian Commercial.

"He is the only man who ever painted a Cannibal Feast while actually witnessing the barbarous orgy. With 4 plates. Cloth, 8½ by 5½ inches."—*Bookseller's Catalogue.*

The cloth strikes us as inadequate for four.

The Small Hours

Oh it's good to be up early
When the mist is cool and curly
On the river bed
And the sleepy summer sky
Hides its head because it's shy
And rather red!

Then the earth is sweet and clean
Where the night has browsed and been
Like a balm,
And to be all green and glowing
And not knowing where one's going
Has charm.

Oh, it's nice to see what's doing
And what's chewing and what's cooing
And what's up
Or what shadows one can find
When the sun sneaks round behind
A buttercup!

And it's fun to be at large
When young rabbits are in charge
Of the road
And the trippers are in bed
So there's nobody to tread
On a toad.

Then the bumble-bee and bird
Have some hope of being heard;
The smells are new
And the little lady's-slipper
Is an early morning dipper
In dew.

Oh, it's lovely to be out
When the buses aren't about
And beetles have their chance!
I can vouch for what I say
From the time I lost my way
After a dance.

A Spanish Settlement

My sister and I are ladies of independent means—at least my sister is—and as she prefers to live in Tangiers I have to prefer it too. Our flat in the modern quarter of the town was quite comfortable until a Spanish family moved into the one above. After that we did not have a moment's peace. The two boys, Benito and Adolfo, played on the stairs and shouted to each other down the lift-shaft, while the mother sang tangos in her bedroom slippers and quarrelled with her cook. I wanted to complain to the landlord about it. My sister didn't. She is one of those placid creatures who will put up with almost anything as long as a fuss can be avoided. She calls it being philosophical. I don't. I call it being weak-kneed. But as she is the one who pays for the flat I have to defer a good deal to her wishes. No complaint therefore was made.

The situation however soon became more serious. I was leaving the building to go and exchange a book at the English library when a deliberate attack was made on me. A walnut shell was thrown at me and it hit me on the handbag. I didn't see who threw it but I had a strong suspicion it came from a window of the Spanish flat. I wanted to make a protest about it. But my sister, Emily, said we were not entitled to make accusations without any definite proofs. No protest therefore was made.

Why I should have been singled out for these attacks instead of my sister I don't know. Perhaps it was because I am the stouter of the two and present

a better target. At all events the next day I was again attacked. I happened to be standing at the front door of our flat telling the Arab butcher's boy what I thought of his rumpsteaks when a paper pellet struck me sharply on the knuckles.

I opened it out and showed it to my sister. It was a sheet of paper torn out of a child's copy-book. On it was some school dictation, disgracefully untidy and written in Spanish. This piece of evidence was so convincing that it only took me twenty minutes to talk my sister into letting me write a protest to the lady upstairs. In courteous but plain terms I asked her to issue such instructions to her offspring as would prevent a recurrence of these attacks. I pushed the note into their letter-box before lunch.

By tea-time we had received a reply. The mother, who signed herself Rosa Bustamante vda. de Bombacha, assured us that such an action would be entirely inconsistent with the characters of her two boys, who always behaved like little gentlemen. She suggested that the piece of paper must have been picked up out of the dust-bin by some mischief-maker who wished to discredit her family.

Emily was inclined to believe her; I was not. I was certain that Benito and Adolfo were the two culprits and that the root of the trouble was that the mother had no proper control over them. Nevertheless we decided to let matters stand as they were and wait and see whether the protest had the desired effect.

It did not have the desired effect. It had no effect at all. That evening a further attack was made on me while I was watering the geraniums on the



"WELL, I'D BETTER BE GETTING BACK—I PROMISED RICHARD HE COULD TEACH ME TO SWIM THIS AFTERNOON."



AT HOME

THE SUCCESSFUL DOCTOR

balcony. Fortunately the projectile, whatever it was, missed me by a few inches. But my dignity suffered just the same. I went straight into the drawing-room and informed Emily about it. I told her that it was simply outrageous that I could not go about my domestic occasions without being harried to death by foreign urchins and that something must be done to put a stop to it.

As all the attacks had been made on me and not on her, Emily was disposed to take a very lenient view of the whole affair. She even tried to make excuses for the two boys and expressed her fears that if we complained to the *concierge* or the landlord it would lead to complications that might spread as far as the law-courts. In short she made it quite clear that she was determined to adhere to the policy of non-intervention which she had adopted right from the start.

"Very well then," I said to her, "if you refuse to raise a finger to protect

me I shall be obliged to take my own measures."

She wanted to know what measures I proposed to take. I did not enlighten her. I said I would take whatever steps I thought fit.

The crisis came the following evening. At exactly half-past six Emily returned from the street after posting some letters. She was wiping her feet on the mat and was just on the point of closing the front-door when a potato struck her on the toque. It was the first attack of the kind that she had experienced and it made a deep impression on her. She stood there for a few moments as though stunned and with her battered hat leaning to one side. And then her whole attitude towards the Spanish question changed. Abandoning her policy of non-intervention she seized a parasol from the umbrella-stand and hurried upstairs as fast as she could in order to pursue a policy of retaliation.

I will draw a veil over what happened

between her, the Spanish mother and the two boys. It will suffice if I say that the furniture in their flat was moved about a bit and there were sounds like the beating of carpets and crockery being broken. At the end of ten minutes Emily came back with a split down the back of her dress and only half a parasol in her hand. Whatever she did it certainly settled the Spanish problem. It was yet another example of how successful violent methods can be when the object is to secure peace. I have never heard the mother sing another tango nor have we been molested by the two boys again.

Emily of course is very pleased with herself. She thinks it is all due to her having put her foot down firmly. Well, I don't mind her taking all the credit for it if she likes, but I don't believe she would ever have done a thing about it if I hadn't thrown the potato at her by way of a little provocation. Still, I'm not going to tell her that.



"BELIEVE ME, I'VE HAD THINGS IN THE R.A. QUITE THIS SIZE!"

No Guts

THERE stands a city high and pure
In Canada's wide tract;
I'd give her name, but am not sure
Which one it is, in fact;

But she has fame, with those that know
In moral ways what's what,
As flawless as her own deep snow,
And, mark you, that's a lot.

She owns a Board of Censors which
Comes down with crushing force
On any act a trifle rich
Or any word that's coarse.

Its influence on stage and screen
Is, put it mildly, stiff;
Such items as a bedroom scene
Come out in half a jiff.

It has no feeling for the stars
Whose brightest gems it cuts,
And most especially it bars
The low expression, "Guts."

Guts! 'Tis a word, I grieve to say,
That one quite oft employs;
One picked it up in childhood's day
Doubtless from vulgar boys.

One might observe a scrap, suppose,
And casually declare
That such-a-one was rich in *those*,
Or was bowled over *there*.

One would speak thus and never shrink,
Or hear without a squirm,
Yet somehow, when one's led to think,
It *is* a lowish term.

I care not what your views may be;
Whate'er your private mind,
I want no argument; for me,
I am henceforth refined.

Ask me not why; but me no buts;
That word no more befouls
My decent speech; where you say "Guts"
I shall refer to bow'ls. DUM-DUM.



THE GENIUS OF CONCILIATION APPEARS TO ★D★LF H★TL★R AT
THE PLOUGH

Being a further example of the Pan-Aryan Romantic Art now made compulsory in Germany.

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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, July 18th.—Lords: Anglo-Turkish Agreement Bill given Second Reading.

Commons: Further Discussion on Sandys Case. Debate on Unemployment.

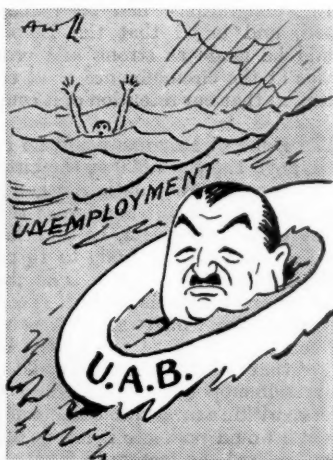
Tuesday, July 19th—Lords: Various Measures advanced a stage.

Commons: Further Discussion on Sandys Case. Debate on Holidays with pay.

Wednesday, July 20th.—Lords: Debate on Empire Settlement.

Commons: Debates on Health in Scotland and More Aeroplanes.

Monday, July 18th.—When the Lords considered the Bill authorising an armaments credit to Turkey the rare spectacle was seen of a Socialist handing out bouquets to a dictator. Lord STRABOLGI praised ATATURK as a soldier, a statesman and a rejuvenator of his people, and, welcoming the loan, wished that something similar could be done for China; but he presumed that the "pro-Fascist section of the Cabinet" was the obstacle. The suggestion that such an *enclave* existed was warmly denied by Lord STANHOPE, who insisted that the only reason why China could not be so helped was her financial position, very different from that of Turkey. But he welcomed Lord STRABOLGI's declaration that there was no notion of an economic encirclement of Germany in Eastern Europe.



The MINISTER OF LABOUR as seen by the Opposition (and some Government supporters).



FLOGGING A DEAD HORSE

"We are told that the House and still more the country are sick and tired of this matter (Ministerial cheers)."—Mr. CHURCHILL.

After Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had told Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON during Questions that he was aware of the preface Signor MUSSOLINI had written to the Minutes of the Grand Fascist Council admitting that Italian troops had been intervening in Spain, and that the British Government would not be in a position to give full effect to the Anglo-Italian Agreement until the Spanish situation could be regarded as settled, the House turned once more, and a little reluctantly (for Parliamentary time is running short), to the SANDYS Case.

The SPEAKER had been considering the new evidence brought by Lt.-Col. HENEAGE, which boiled down to the fact that the individual members of the military Court of Inquiry had no idea that Mr. SANDYS was being summoned to appear before them, and had not met when Mr. SANDYS raised the question in the House on June 29th; and in his view, though the officers concerned were obviously cleared of any censure, the finding of the Committee of Privileges remained substantially true. He therefore advised the House not to pursue the point.

But it did. Mr. ATTLEE urged that the matter should be referred back to the Committee of Privileges, and though Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR thought the Select Committee should

be left to deal with it, and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN agreed with him, Mr. ATTLEE gave notice that he would put down a motion to nullify the proceedings of the House for July 11th on the report of the Committee of Privileges, and to refer the report back to the Committee.

Mr. BROWN later defended the working of the Unemployment Assistance Board as energetic and humane, but he met with determined criticism from Conservatives as well as Socialists.

Tuesday, July 19th.—The House decided to leave things to the Select Committee, in spite of Mr. ATTLEE's motion and his plea that there had been a definite suppression of facts which had led to an injustice to innocent men and to the House. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR moved an amendment instructing the Select Committee to take note of the new circumstances which had come to light, and this was carried after Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had advised the House to accept it as the neatest way out. In the course of his speech the P.M. described how misunderstanding had arisen in the first place owing to his and others' assumption, when Mr. SANDYS reported that he had been summoned to appear before a Military Court, that the summons had come from the Court itself; and he assured Mr. SANDYS, who rose to ask



"SEND FORTH THE BEST YE BREED."
Kipling.

"We had the responsibility to develop this enormous estate so far as possible with our own race."—Lord SNELL on the Report on Overseas Settlement.



"COME AND HAVE ONE—IT WILL WARM YOU UP."

that he might be cleared on this point, that he considered the misunderstanding to have been general. The SPEAKER's ruling, he reminded Members, had made it impossible for Mr. HORE-BELISHA, who was anxious to make a statement, to speak at all.

Mr. CHURCHILL was greatly dissatisfied that eleven days could have passed during which the P.M., the House and the Chair were left in ignorance of the facts, and expressed his surprise that Mr. HORE-BELISHA had not asked special permission from the SPEAKER in order to divert blame from innocent parties.

But, as Mr. A. P. HERBERT pointed out, in a speech which acted like a tonic on a jaded Treasury Bench and delighted a House rapidly tiring of the whole business, Mr. CHURCHILL was attempting to combine the incompatible functions of centre-forward and referee. "One minute he is bounding forward to the attack, kicking goals in all directions, and the next minute, dignified, but still bounding, he is blowing his whistle." How Mr. CHURCHILL managed to reconcile with considerations of taste his position on the Committee of Privileges in this matter was more than Mr. HERBERT could see; and as for the

report of that body, Mr. HERBERT thought the substance to be as flabby as the language, which read like a note to General FRANCO.

Later the House generously decided



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO

Sir SAMUEL CHAPMAN's proved
his worth
In Perth,
Where he helps to run
Everything under the sun.

that the compulsory annual holiday of the agricultural labourer should not exceed three consecutive days!

Wednesday, July 20th.—The Lords had a very interesting debate on the report of the Oversea Settlement Board. It was opened by Lord SNELL, who noted with pleasure that the ugly word "emigration" had been abandoned, and urged that the Empire should be made as strong and prosperous at the circumference as at the centre, so that our retention of it could be justified.

The Duke of DEVONSHIRE, who replied, gave 19½ per 1,000 as the birth-rate below which populations began to decline. Between 1876 and to-day that of the United Kingdom, he said, had dropped from 36 per 1,000 to 15 per 1,000, and the falls in the Dominion figures were nearly as serious, except in South Africa, which was still expanding comfortably at 24 per 1,000. He agreed that unless the Empire could be made self-supporting in the way of defence within a measurable time someone else would populate it for us, and he considered the factors in favour of migration from this country to be more favourable than they had been for some time.

Another Club-room Story

It was in the smoke-room of the Club. It always is, of course. Innumerable Colonels lay asleep in armchairs, mufti, bay-windows and so on. One had been dead since 1865, but no one dared to disturb him. In the fireplace the artificial coals cast strange shadows on the walls. (Ah, those walls . . . what strange tales they must have heard!) The lights were shaded discreetly . . .

Outside the wind howled and moaned. Sometimes it howled. Sometimes, again, it moaned. Babbage leaned forward, a strange expression on his face. We sat up expectantly. We knew that expression of old. Babbage had seen strange places. Known strange people.

"It's all very well for you fellows talking about murder," he said. (No one was, of course.) "As we sit here comfortably in our armchairs, murder seems very remote and unreal. Take me, for instance; no one looking at me would dream that I was a murderer."

"No," said Harbottle, leaning forward, a strange expression on his face.

"No more I am," said Babbage with a cryptic smile, reaching for the decanter.

There was a tense silence.

"You must tell us about it," said young Folles, in his peculiar falsetto.

We drew our chairs round in a circle. We were a strange company. All could have told strange stories. There was old Warspite, who had driven his own coach-and-four up the Matterhorn. There was the gallant de Trop, who had been a vagabond in five hemispheres, and whose *Bicycle Across the Sahara* had run into nine editions (amongst other things). There was Bullingdon-Faugh, who got his Blue for Last-acrosse in '08. There was van Guard, the notorious Ex-diplomat—you remember the Attaché Case, or the Embassy Trunk Mystery, as the papers called it?—there was Lieut. Jones, the last Welshman to fight a duel in Bavaria; there was Admiral Crichton, and Friend.

Silence fell upon us, broken only by the perpetual hissing of siphons and the subdued snarls of sleeping Colonels.

"It was in a lonely pass in the Cévennes," began Babbage dreamily. "Snow lay everywhere, soft and of an unbelievable whiteness. Standing there alone, I felt at once all the emotions that only a man standing alone in a lonely pass in the Cévennes surrounded by snow (soft and of an unbelievable whiteness) can feel. From the cloudless sky the sun blazed down, majestic,

impersonal. Somewhere a cornrake whistled—whistled and was silent."

He paused to relight his cigar. The rest of us sat as though turned to stone.

"Suddenly," went on the narrator, "I had the inexplicable feeling that I was no longer alone. Standing in front of me was a strange figure. His face was a mask of tragedy, of human ambition and human failure, of an inevitable sinking lower and lower. He was up to his knees in snow. His clothes, green cummerbund and blue burnous, were pathetically gay. They took me back to a sleepy afternoon among the bazaars of Ping-Pong. . . ."

"Mrmph!" said a gouty Colonel (in his sleep).

"He approached me as quickly as his leaking snow-shoes would permit. He looked furtively over his shoulder

to make sure that we were unobserved. 'Guv'nor,' he said in a rapid and almost unintelligible *patois*, 'Guv'nor, I'm on me uppers. Honest, I am. I only want a start. I can get a job if you'll only give me a start. Honest, I can. Will you give me a start?'

"Yes," I said. 'Boo!' I said."

"Go on," muttered a Mr. Tooth almost inaudibly.

Babbage stubbed out his cigar absently on a recumbent Colonel.

"There isn't any more," he said with a strange smile.

We sat as though glued to our seats. At last I moved. Getting up, I crossed the room and, picking up Babbage in my arms, tossed him lightly through the nearest bay-window.

No one, looking at me, would dream that I was a murderer . . .



"WATER OR SPLASH, SIR?"

At the Play

"LITTLE STRANGER" (ROYALTY)

As a warning that daughters of deceased business partners should never be added to one's family without preliminary inspection I feel this play is probably superfluous, and I am afraid I cannot say very much in its favour as a laughter-maker. It is styled a comedy and is produced as if its characters were supposed to be acceptable people, but their behaviour carries small conviction and their situations are largely farcical.

The partner's daughter is named *Angela* (Miss JUNE CLYDE), and her father had been an American associate of *Mr. Shaw* (Mr. HENRY HEWITT), who in his turn has been a figure in the City but has retired to Sussex to write books and rush excitedly about his house saying "By God!" regularly once a minute. Kindness is his chief virtue, but tinged with so little sense that it is a danger to all round him.

Angela's arrival occurs very soon after the play opens, and she has not been in the house five minutes when anyone with half an eye could see she is a tiresome little creature out to make as much trouble as she can. Her line is excessive humility combined with aggressive helpfulness, and the presence of anything male stimulates her into giving a non-stop performance of optical acrobatics. *Mrs. Shaw* (Miss AGNES LAUCLAN), a harmless, pleasant woman on the young side of middle age, she insists on helping downstairs as if she were eighty. *Mr. Shaw* soon finds himself helplessly giving ground to the ancient strategy of the desolate-baby-whom-nobody-understands. *Elsie* (Miss MARJORIE STEWART), his daughter, and the masterful stockbroker (Mr. GERALD CASE) who is unsuccessfully pursuing her are served out with maliciously conflicting advice. Both *Eric Shaw* (Mr. ROBERT EDDISON) and *Jerry* (Mr. NIGEL STOCK), the boy next-door, are ogled into promises of marriage, and the sound North-country maid, *Daisy* (Miss WINIFRED HINDLE), has her loyalty undermined by tales of the high pay and relative ease of servants in America.

In spite of the crudity of *Angela's* methods the *Shaws* are very slow to take her measure, and it is not until

Mrs. Shaw discovers her hanging round *Mr. Shaw's* neck late one evening that things come to a head. *Mr. Shaw* at the moment is in fact doing his level best to disentangle himself, but appearances are against him and tempers frayed,

a suitcase and walks out into the night. Her absence creates a great deal of fuss and pother next morning, but a criminally bogus telegram from *Angela* brings her flying home again; and at this point *Angela* decides that she has had her bit of fun out of the *Shaws*, and goes, leaving no regret behind her. It is typical of the values of the play that in this last scene *Mrs. Shaw*, whom you would think had taken enough punishment to lead any reasonable woman to violence, is begging *Angela* almost tearfully to stay on, just before the curtain falls; while its authors think nothing of arranging for the unfortunate stockbroker to be clubbed on the head with a heavy silver tennis-trophy near the end so that he can drop conveniently unconscious and make a miraculous recovery in the arms of *Elsie*, suddenly awakened to his somewhat doubtful charms.

What, you may well ask, is the matter with *Angela*? I cannot say for certain. At one point in the play she admits that it must be nice to have so much power that other people can be pushed about like puppets, at the end she declares that her father had suggested as some sort of complicated revenge for an injury which was beyond me that she should

make hay of the *Shaw* home. Neither course seems at all in character for a pretty little nitwit with her few available thoughts concentrated on the nearest man. The play would have been more interesting if she had been given a subtler, twisted personality, and much funnier if it had been rattled off as farce.

That Miss CLYDE failed to suggest a ruthless home-wrecker is to my mind largely the fault of the author; so far as it goes her performance is competent. I think the best acting of the evening is by Miss STEWART and Mr. EDDISON, who bring in a welcome note of genuine comedy. ERIC.

Love on the Dole

"If junior nurses were not paid more they would be pushed into the arms of the union secretaries, said Mr. P. R. Welch at a meeting of the Wairarapa Hospital Board today."—*New Zealand Paper*.

"Although the report was unanimous the Committee had no easy task. They had to fall back upon commonsense."—*Daily Sketch*.

We hope no one was hurt.



STUDY OF A HOME-WRECKER

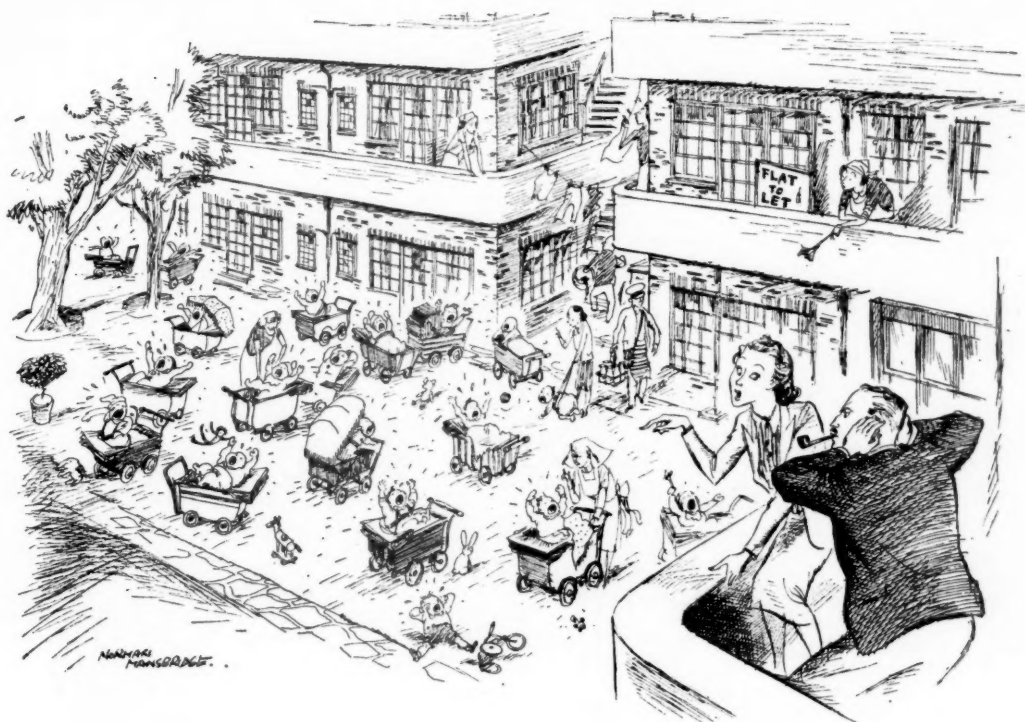
Angela Drayton Miss JUNE CLYDE
Hilary Shaw Mr. HENRY HEWITT
Charlotte Shaw Miss AGNES LAUCLAN

so, after he has announced his intention of honouring his obligation to his dead friend before everything, his wife packs



ORPHANS OF THE MORN

Elsie Shaw Miss MARJORIE STEWART
Eric Shaw Mr. ROBERT EDDISON



"I TOLD YOU HE WAS CRYING!"

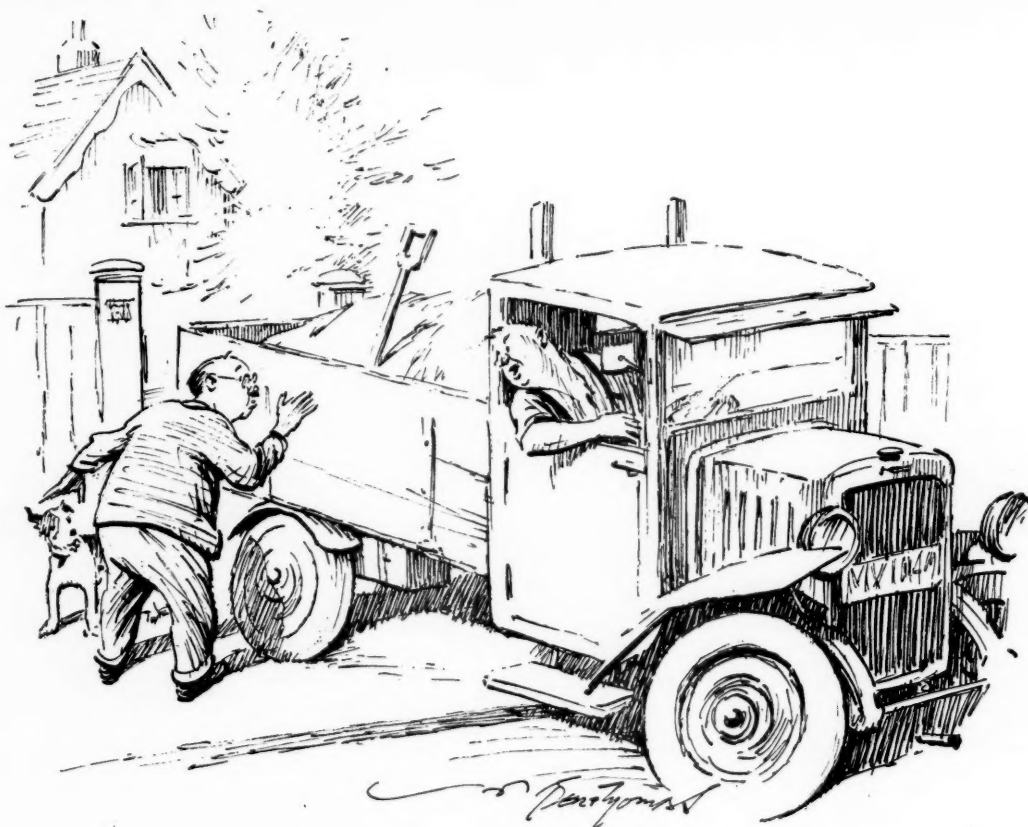
The Hat Trick

I MET my love at a Private View,
And she wore a funny hat;
 It was something between a parrot's maw
 And a T-shaped drain-pipe made of straw.
 'Twas the funniest hat you ever saw
 And it knocked me rather flat;
 For I wanted to ask if she loved me
 too—
But she wore a funny hat.

We met on the eve of our wedding-day,
And she wore a funny hat,
 Like a catherine-wheel on a cruet set,
 With a veil like a trawler's fishing-net
 All garnished about with blobs of jet,
 Which somewhat spoilt our chat;
 For I thought of a million things to
 say—
But she wore a funny hat.

The whole of Society flanked the aisle,
And they all wore funny hats,
 Like saucers and saddles and snails with wings,
 Or the myriad shapes that a nightmare brings,
 And I wanted to think of serious things,
 About marriage and all that;
 But I couldn't do anything else but smile
When they all wore funny hats.

My wife is beside me in the train,
And she's wearing a funny hat.
 It's grand to be really alone at last,
 With all the fuss and the scramble past,
 And my heart should surely be beating fast,
 For she's well worth looking at.
 But an icy clamp is upon my brain
 And my nerves are snapping beneath the strain;
 But wait—hurrah, I'm in love again!
She has taken off her hat. M. D.



"THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR. YOU HAVE TO BE RUDDY CLOSE BEFORE YOU TOUCH."

My Dog Costa

To the General Manager of Railways.

DEAR SIR,—On Friday I went in the train with my dog Costa and the guard said put him in the dog-box. When I came to Vergelegen station no dog and the box open so the guard says my dog Costa bit a hole in it and the lock fell out and the dog too.

Please attend to this matter. My dog Costa is valuable and I want about seventeen-pounds-ten for him.

Yours truly,

BAN JOHANSEN.

From the System Manager, South African Railways.

SIR,—I am directed to inform you that inquiries have been made into the disappearance of your dog from the dog-box of a train. The guard states that the animal must have gnawed a hole through the wooden door so that

the lock fell off, thus releasing him, and he leapt out.

The guard states that he doubts if the animal was a dog at all, but supposes it to have been some kind of rodent to be able to gnaw through a plane surface. If it were such an animal, the Administration can accept no responsibility, because rodents come under a different schedule, like lions, tigers and other feræ naturæ.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed)——, System Manager.

To the System Manager of Railways.

SIR,—The guard told me to write to the General Manager, and never spoke about System Managers or rodents. I don't suppose old Baartman knows what rodent means, and I don't very much. If you mean my dog Costa got sticking out teeth in front that lets him gnaw boards and things that is quite

right. He is a kind of dog that got all sorts of teeth but that don't make him no rodent so please attend to the matter.

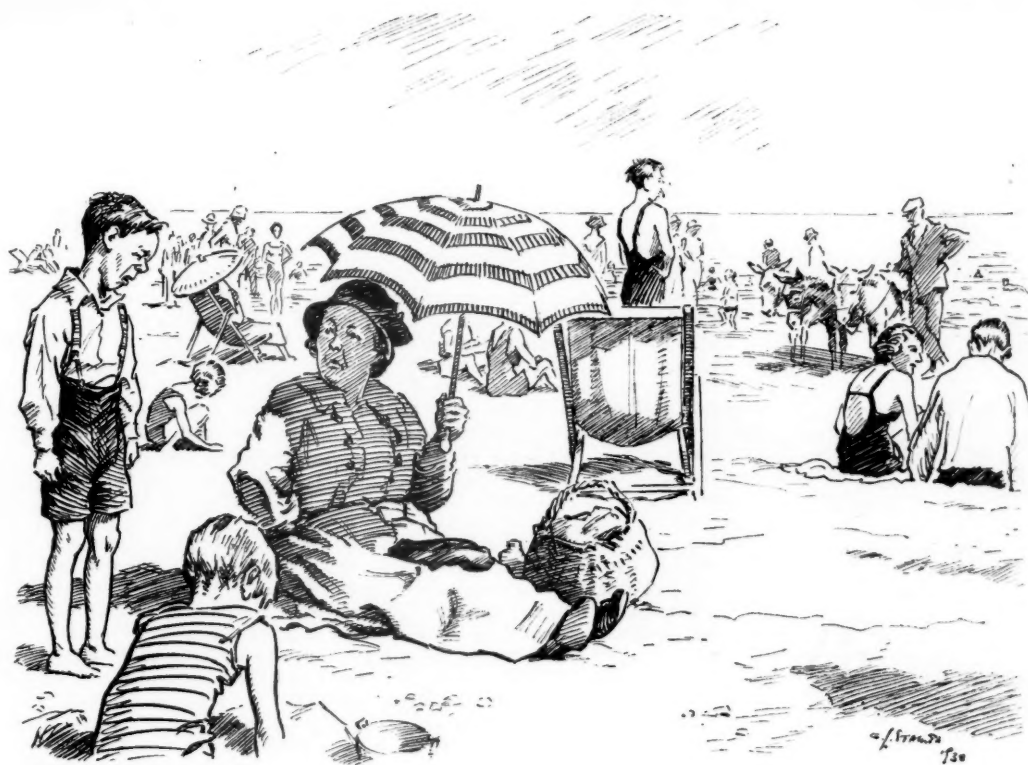
What the guard says is nothing and nobody asked him to go talking about lions and tigers. What got lost was a dog about which I want seventeen pounds and never mind the ten shillings. Since he hasn't come back the children are screaming all day so please attend to the matter.

My wife's father worked on railways on the old Cape Government Railways a ganger near Breakfast on the Riversdale line I think. She says the General Manager was most likely your grandfather because all railway people are like one big family so that may encourage you to attend to the matter of my dog Costa. He is not a rodent but a dog.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

BAN JOHANSEN.



"WHY CAN'T YER BE 'APPY AN' THROW STONES AT SOMETHINK—OR SOMETHINK?"

From the System Manager.

SIR,—With reference to your claim for a dog lost from the dog-box of a train, will you please supply me with the animal's pedigree and other details to support the value placed on it of £17.

To the System Manager.

SIR,—I can't be sure if my dog Costa ever got a pedigree. A man in a store gave him to be a watchdog running about showing his teeth and barking which he always does. Now my boy has come along, his name is Flattyre Mazuma, a Sutu. He says he saw my dog near where the train goes on the farm Losfontein which is a place covered in burrs something cruel. My dog Costa was running hard towards the West which goes to the Karoo, then the desert, then the sea. If that dog gets covered with the sort of burrs they got on Losfontein it will take a bit off his value and that ought to be paid me when he is found, say, ten pounds.

If he goes on West he will get to the Atlantic Ocean and then swim. I know

about oceans and geography being a Swede Afrikander and my family seafarers. According to what I make out looking at a flat map if he swims he will get to Brazil or else the Bight of Benin. But when I look at the round map on a ball in the children's school it seems that he will get to the Bay of Bengal. Please attend to this matter and send a man to each place to ask if they seen my dog Costa. Also send the ten pounds to go on with.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant thanking you in anticipation,

BAN JOHANSEN.

To the System Manager.

SIR,—Although I sent my boy Flattyre Mazuma each day to the post no letter came with my ten pounds for my dog Costa, which shows you do not attend to the matter. It is no use talking to me about rodents because the fact is your old box was rotten and my dog Costa fell out and had to walk although I paid his railway ticket.

Only I must tell you that yesterday my dog Costa turned up in the chicken run eating eggs. But I still consider you owe me eight pounds for damages done to the constitution of my dog and besides that at least a shilling for his railway ticket I paid. Things are not so bad with me now but still I want you to attend to this matter.

Yours truly,

BAN JOHANSEN.

From the System Manager.

SIR,—Seeing that your dog has turned up safely the claim automatically lapses and there is no further need for you to furnish particulars about his pedigree or a certificate of value.

To the System Manager.

If I live to be a thousand years I will still think you owe me at least six pounds for damages done to my dog Costa. If that is your system I don't think much of it. I have not the honour to be any kind of servant of yours.

BAN JOHANSEN.

If You Should See a Green Bird

DAVID
LANGDON

My neighbours are all very fond of animals. Most of them have gone away now and shut their houses up. Because they are so fond of animals and think I also am fond of animals, most of them have left their animals in my care.

Once the news got round that I had promised to visit the Sealyham at Number 40 twice a day with provisions, and to put the pink ointment on his paw and make a short speech of good cheer as well, the telephone soon grew too hot to hold with people telling me how lucky it was I was going to be at home. In no time I had on the roll the goldfish with gout at 47, the white cat at 71, the Angoras at 50, the canary at 42 and the three green birds at 75.

At moments, hurrying out with a lamp and a jug of water, I have felt not a little like FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, while at others I have compared myself, as I went the rounds to my beleaguered outposts with a crumb of comfort here and an ant's egg there, to some great commander of the past. It was through no fault of mine that the senior of the MacPlush birds got away.

For, as I told the police when I rang up the station, the creature had feigned sleep with the most unwarrantable duplicity, and nipped out of the open door of the cage in the moment when I turned away to get its seed.

"That may be," said the constable at the other end, who from the beginning took a very heavy view of the whole affair, "but more particulars I must 'ave before setting our machinery in motion."

"Well," I said, "it's a small monoplane model, possibly a lovebird, with a green finish and a rather Mongolian

cast of feature." He was writing it all down.

"Any distinguishing marks?"

"It had a bit of egg on its nose this morning."

"Can't rely on egg," said the constable, who sounded as if he had a moustache and knew what he was talking about, "it blows off. You couldn't tell me the 'eighth and weight of the escaped, I suppose?"

"Not for certain," I admitted.

"Nor sex, I presume?"

"No."

A long-drawn-out hissing came from the other end, like an immense inner-tube dying stoutly.

"Just looking through the lists," the constable then said. "There's a Peke picked up in Froggnal, but that wouldn't apply. Quite sure it's not a pigeon—I see there's one of them loose?"

"Absolutely," I assured him, "nor one of the Flying Squad."

Not thirty seconds later news came that the bird had taken up its stance on top of the lamp-post outside my house, and was issuing impudent challenges in a shrill sub-tropical patois to a group of men who were instilling a little life into one of the Corporation's steam-rollers. I went out, taking with me the long-handled net with which I had once entertained the hope of landing trout.

The bird greeted me with a volley of abuse.

"You'll want a shot-gun to get 'im down, mate," said one of the men.

"Dare say I could 'op up on your shoulders, like," a small man wearing a battered bowler-hat suggested. "Gimme the shrimping-scoop."

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"DO GO AND GET MY LIBRARY BOOK, DARLING—IT'S UP IN MY BEDROOM."

"WHAT'S THE TITLE?"

"I'M NOT ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN, BUT I THINK IT'S CALLED 'MEN ARE SO HELPLESS.'"

Two men earnestly at work to outwit a small bird which is watching them critically from the very top of a lamp-post is as good a spectacle as the next. A crowd had already formed when the bird eluded the shrimping-scoop with a hideous scream of triumph, and the man in the bowler-hat, lunging too far, left my shoulder for the pavement.

I joined him there a moment later. The crowd thoroughly approved.

At this the eldest of the MacPlush flock made a final comment at which it was easy to guess, started up its engine with a loud whirr, and set its rudder for a thick cluster of trees further up the street. It was soon completely lost to view.

"Well, did you ever!" was the consensus of opinion in steam-roller circles.

"It's the last you'll ever see of that little 'ell-ound," the Bowler-hat observed, knocking the dust out of his coat. "But I shouldn't worry if I was you. Talk about a wicked tongue!"

"That's all very fine," I said, "but

it belongs to a neighbour of mine, a devil of a fierce chap, and I'm supposed to be looking after it."

"Ho, it's like that, is it?" The Bowler-hat looked very thoughtful. Then, weighing his words carefully, he said: "I've never been able to tell the difference between one of them varmint and another."

"Nor have I," I admitted.

"Think your neighbour can?"

"I should doubt it."

"My brother-in-law breeds 'em, though 'eaven knows why. 'E's got a bunch of green ones just like 'is lordship 'ere. You don't 'appen to know its sex, I suppose?"

"No."

There was a long pause.

"You'd 'ave to risk that," said the Bowler-hat.

I took him warmly by the hand. The thought that there was at least a sporting chance that MacPlush, who once shot five tigers before breakfast, would never know pleased me so much

that I went off and put saffron into the water of the goldfish at 47. I was told later that it was really into the water of the canary at 42 I should have put it, but as the goldfish was dead anyway by then it couldn't have hurt it much.

ERIC.

Billy-ho!

"A trans-Atlantic air liner forms the background for this actional drama, and it is while the giant goat is flying through space at 300 miles per hour that the film unfolds its enthralling tale of murder, blackmail and romance."—*Cheshire Paper*.

Brighter Cricket

"I talked with him afterwards and he told me that after orchids cricket comes next in his interest. At his place at Gatton he endeavours to produce new varieties every year."—*Sussex Daily News*.

"The bride's mother wore a suit of beige lace with brick accessories."

Dean Forest Guardian.

To heave at her son-in-law?

If You Should See a Green Bird

DAVID
LANGDON

My neighbours are all very fond of animals. Most of them have gone away now and shut their houses up. Because they are so fond of animals and think I also am fond of animals, most of them have left their animals in my care.

Once the news got round that I had promised to visit the Sealyham at Number 40 twice a day with provisions, and to put the pink ointment on his paw and make a short speech of good cheer as well, the telephone soon grew too hot to hold with people telling me how lucky it was I was going to be at home. In no time I had on the roll the goldfish with gout at 47, the white cat at 71, the Angoras at 50, the canary at 42 and the three green birds at 75.

At moments, hurrying out with a lamp and a jug of water, I have felt not a little like FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE, while at others I have compared myself, as I went the rounds to my beleaguered outposts with a crumb of comfort here and an ant's egg there, to some great commander of the past. It was through no fault of mine that the senior of the MacPlush birds got away.

For, as I told the police when I rang up the station, the creature had feigned sleep with the most unwarrantable duplicity, and nipped out of the open door of the cage in the moment when I turned away to get its seed.

"That may be," said the constable at the other end, who from the beginning took a very heavy view of the whole affair, "but more particulars I must 'ave before setting our machinery in motion."

"Well," I said, "it's a small mono-plane model, possibly a lovebird, with a green finish and a rather Mongolian

cast of feature." He was writing it all down.

"Any distinguishing marks?"

"It had a bit of egg on its nose this morning."

"Can't rely on egg," said the constable, who sounded as if he had a moustache and knew what he was talking about, "it blows off. You couldn't tell me the 'eighth and weight of the escaped, I suppose?"

"Not for certain," I admitted.

"Nor sex, I presume?"

"No."

A long-drawn-out hissing came from the other end, like an immense inner-tube dying stoutly.

"Just looking through the lists," the constable then said. "There's a Peke picked up in Frogna, but that wouldn't apply. Quite sure it's not a pigeon—I see there's one of them loose?"

"Absolutely," I assured him, "nor one of the Flying Squad."

Not thirty seconds later news came that the bird had taken up its stance on top of the lamp-post outside my house, and was issuing impudent challenges in a shrill sub-tropical patois to a group of men who were instilling a little life into one of the Corporation's steam-rollers. I went out, taking with me the long-handled net with which I had once entertained the hope of landing trout.

The bird greeted me with a volley of abuse.

"You'll want a shot-gun to get 'im down, mate," said one of the men.

"Dare say I could 'op up on your shoulders, like," a small man wearing a battered bowler-hat suggested. "Gimme the shrimping-scoop."

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"DO GO AND GET MY LIBRARY BOOK, DARLING—IT'S UP IN MY BEDROOM."

"WHAT'S THE TITLE?"

"I'M NOT ABSOLUTELY CERTAIN, BUT I THINK IT'S CALLED 'MEN ARE SO HELPLESS.'"

Two men earnestly at work to outwit a small bird which is watching them critically from the very top of a lamp-post is as good a spectacle as the next. A crowd had already formed when the bird eluded the shrimping-scoop with a hideous scream of triumph, and the man in the bowler-hat, lunging too far, left my shoulder for the pavement.

I joined him there a moment later. The crowd thoroughly approved.

At this the eldest of the MacPlush flock made a final comment at which it was easy to guess, started up its engine with a loud whirr, and set its rudder for a thick cluster of trees further up the street. It was soon completely lost to view.

"Well, did you ever!" was the consensus of opinion in steam-roller circles.

"It's the last you'll ever see of that little 'ell-ound," the Bowler-hat observed, knocking the dust out of his coat. "But I shouldn't worry if I was you. Talk about a wicked tongue!"

"That's all very fine," I said, "but

it belongs to a neighbour of mine, a devil of a fierce chap, and I'm supposed to be looking after it."

"Ho, it's like that, is it?" The Bowler-hat looked very thoughtful. Then, weighing his words carefully, he said: "I've never been able to tell the difference between one of them varmints and another."

"Nor have I," I admitted.

"Think your neighbour can?"

"I should doubt it."

"My brother-in-law breeds 'em, though 'eaven knows why. 'E's got a bunch of green ones just like 'is lordship 'ere. You don't 'appen to know its sex, I suppose?"

"No."

There was a long pause.

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To heave at her son-in-law?



"THREE MORE MIXED METAPHORS FROM THE GOVERNMENT BENCHES YESTERDAY, COMRADE."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Service for Freedom

SIR EDWARD GRIGG has written a good book for which he might have found a better name than *Britain Looks at Germany* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 5/-). It is true that he—a true Briton, if not Britain incarnate—does look at Germany with apprehension, a good deal of sympathy and some admiration; but it is on Britain herself that he keeps his weather eye. He is concerned, moreover, at the way in which Germany, and indeed Europe, looks at Britain: like MATTHEW ARNOLD seventy years ago, he finds in that scrutiny a lack of respect which he is fain to admit is not altogether unjustified. His pamphlet, therefore, is a plea to his fellow-countrymen to pull up their socks and try to cut a better figure in the world. It is not enough, he argues, to bask complacently in our boasted liberties: if we would carry that weight in the world's affairs which Sir EDWARD believes it important (to the world and ourselves) that we should carry, we must be ready to defend those liberties even to the point of sacrificing some small part of them. For there is not only derision but danger across those narrow seas which have ceased to be our bulwark, and it would be fatal to delay action until it is upon us. We must be ready for a measure of national organisation and national service, the scope of which Sir EDWARD explains in lucid detail, here and now—a finding unpalatable to the hardened individualist but very likely a sound one.

Two Noble Centuries

The chequered career of Welbeck Abbey—which in the course of two hundred years saw its Canons cede to WHALLEYS, WHALLEYS to CAVENDISHES, CAVENDISHES to HOLLESES and HOLLESES to HARLEYS—with BENTINCKS in the offing as the first volume closes—has been intimately treated by Professor A. S. TURBERVILLE at the request of the Duke of PORTLAND. *A History of Welbeck Abbey and its Owners, 1539-1755* (FABER AND FABER, 25/-) has obviously entailed the handling of an enormous mass of material, most of it extremely dull, for the noble houses picturesquely

described by BURKE as "the great oaks that shade a country" have seldom produced any particular literary crop themselves or encouraged it to grow beneath them. It is true that "the Loyall Duke of Newcastle" and his wife MARGARET both dabbled in letters, and that the HARLEYS collected a splendid library and were the friends or patrons of SWIFT, POPE and PRIOR. Yet as a whole the owners of Welbeck exhibit little of the vivacity that preserves the less exalted records of, say, the PASTONS and VERNEYS, though their historian's careful scholarship and his obvious enthusiasm for a magnificent assemblage of period pieces are substantial aids to good showmanship.

With a Spinning-Rod in Scotland

G. BALFOUR-KINNEAR,

Where brown waters and jade
Rush by rock, "cauld" and weir,
A new primer has made—
Spinning Salmon, and here
Is each trick of that trade.

Not of purists is he
Who to "Jock Scott" are sealed,
Who as slow to spin be
As the lilies a-field
When the Fish from the sea
Runs, sea-silver, deep-keeled;

But our author reveals
With a *pro*—ne'er a *con*—
His crank casting-reels
And his dogmas upon
Each bait which appeals
'Twixt the Tweed and the Don.

Here's a book, then, to buy
If you'd spin a gold sprat
When you've failed with that fly
Which you flaunt in your hat;
It's— Who publishes? Why,
Messrs. LONGMANS do that.



"... OF COURSE WE DIDN'T LET THE ARCHITECT HAVE IT ALL HIS OWN WAY!"



Little Albert (always thirsting for knowledge). "UNCLE, DO THEY PRONOUNCE THAT RICOCHAFING OR RICOCHETTING?"

F. H. Townsend, August 1st, 1906.

An Un-bookish Bookseller

The best way to praise the *Adventures of a Bookseller* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 12/6) to English people is to say that they are fully as delightful as *The Story of San Michele*, this being apparently the only autobiography by a foreigner that the Great British Public has taken to its heart since the War. The Great British Public, loving a good funeral, will perhaps be disappointed that Signor ORIOLI's story contains less about disasters and diseases than AXEL MUNTHE's did, and also less about animals. On the other hand, it will be delighted to find much more about sex, and, above all, much about food of all sorts. Like MUNTHE, ORIOLI has some splendid stories to tell of his wanderings about Europe. His adventures with the barrel containing the royal glass, which he was ordered not to let out of his sight, are as entertaining as MUNTHE's with the "corpse-

attendant." ORIOLI's name is inscribed on the official roll of fame as the publisher of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, and other works by English writers, in Florence. He found D. H. LAWRENCE a rather tiresome person. His famous phoenix emblem reminded ORIOLI of "a pigeon having a bath in a slop-basin." With his usual engaging frankness ORIOLI gives an explanation of D. H. LAWRENCE's unhappiness, probably true, though it cannot be detailed on this chaste page. ORIOLI knows London well (though he was born near Ravenna), and likes many things over here, such as the lovely names the Cockneys give their favourite dishes—"Baby's Head" and "Toad-in-the-hole." But if you want a guide through the pleasant places of Italy you could not choose a better. Tuscany, the shores of the Adriatic, Ischia, the uplands of Sorrento—you can find out from this book where to go if you are looking for good food and wine and amusing adventures.

Optimism in Mayfair

There is a twofold art in facing up to what COWPER—who knew all about it—calls “a frowning providence,” and in the absence of faith and morals much may be done with little things like tame hares and a greenhouse. But the objects of enjoyment should not be class privileges (1) because they are insecure, (2) because the sense that they are exclusive tends to become a guilty one. It seems odd in Sir HUGH WALPOLE, an advocate for the enjoyment of simple pleasures, to have planted *The Joyful Delaneys* (MACMILLAN, 8/6) in London—where nothing can be had for nothing—and depicted them as gaining a precarious livelihood by letting the family mansion out in flats to tenants as needy as themselves. Much sympathy is bespoken for this costly tenacity in an untenable position—a tenacity apt to end in ruin or suicide or both. The theme of shabby gentility in post-War London has its Zolaesque aspects, but the salvaging of the *Delaneys* is pure melodrama; and the novelist is less engaged in coping with a social problem than in promulgating the new hedonism—good luck to it!—and composing a panegyric of old London.

Trumpeter

Only Americans seem to know the secret of that style which can pass in a moment, without a break and without any incongruity, from conversational picturesque slang to a subtly-constructed “literary” sentence. *Young Man with a Horn* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), by DOROTHY BAKER, is written in this style, and very well; for although it lends itself to sentimentality, into which the narrator here occasionally drops, it suits the story perfectly. The Young Man in question is a jazz trumpeter of genius, and the novel is the story of his short life. He was born with a passion for music, taught himself to play the piano and then the trumpet, soon became famous and rich, made an unfortunate marriage, took to drinking too much and staying up all night to play for his own satisfaction and died before he was thirty. It sounds, so, like a Hollywood story; actually the reason behind the little tragedy is too subtle ever to be grasped by the films’ immense audience. Not many people can understand the fascination of making music that keeps a few players together night after night, nearly all night, improvising for the love of it, after a full day’s work at the same kind of thing. This intensely readable book may help towards an explanation.

Mr. Punch's Cousins Go Visiting

When he took his now-famous puppets across the Atlantic Mr. WALTER WILKINSON had to swallow his deep-rooted

loathing of the motor-car, for pushing a show-barrow through England is one thing and pushing it from New York to New Mexico through the vasty middle of America is quite another. *Puppets Through America* (BLES, 7/6) tells of attendance at the second annual American Puppetry Festival—there are something like fifteen hundred professional puppet-shows in the States, many of them ambitious in range and technically advanced—and of performances hilariously received by audiences as different as a large girls’ reformatory and a handful of Indians; the book is written with the humour and freshness of observation which have distinguished his other works, and it is interesting to note that a writer who cannot find a good word to say for industrialism should have discovered so much to approve in aspects of American life which are less headlined over here than gang-murders and mass-production. He was admittedly meeting mainly students and artists, but he found an unaffected enthusiasm for the arts in their widest sense, a great deal of hard work as well as talk being put into them, a sounder knowledge of European politics than is common here and a conviction that only in democratic survival is there any hope for the things of the mind.



Lost Property

The Machinations of Dr. Grue (GEOFFREY BLES, 7/6) were so varied and numerous that Mr. H. M. RALEIGH has abundant opportunity to exhibit his aptitude for creating ludicrous situations. No sooner had Professor Uprichard made a chemical discovery that could revolutionise the world than the dear old gentleman lost the formula, and then a fast and fierce hunt began. As many of us know, a hunt when conducted by Mr. RALEIGH is not likely to be dull or lacking in

incident, and all the participants in this chase were at times in need of urgent relief. Assistance both for the “sinister” Doctor and the absent-minded Professor was provided by ingenious allies, and the record of their lively manoeuvres can be safely recommended for light holiday reading.

East and West

Admirers of Mr. CECIL M. WILLS’s novels will doubtless be glad to hear that *A Body in the Dawn* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) is “a ‘Boscobell’ detective story.” The earlier scenes of this rather lurid drama are, however, laid in Kashmir, to which country Cynthia Bembridge had flown after being acquitted of murdering her husband, and Chief-Inspector Geoffrey Boscobell does not appear until Cynthia has returned to England and become involved in yet another crime. Boscobell puts up a good performance while tracking down the murderer, and Mr. WILLS gives his readers a fair chance to solve the mystery for themselves.

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Charivaria

A FIRM of motor manufacturers has produced what it describes as the ideal family car. A startling innovation in this model is that there is room for father.

★ ★ ★

Visibility Improving

"'Eyeglass in Gaza'
by Aldous Huxley."

Sale Catalogue.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent complains of insects that invaded his house through the letter-box and ate small holes in his morning newspaper. He should try it over on his pianola.

★ ★ ★

During a recent performance by a concert-party at a South coast resort, a minor mishap caused the floor of the stage to collapse. The audience remarked that they had never known a show go down so well.

★ ★ ★



A correspondent is puzzled by the number of hikers who carry field-glasses. Hasn't it occurred to him that they are probably walking home from race-courses?

★ ★ ★

Many inhabitants of Cornwall are dark-complexioned, with black hair, says a writer. Although, as has already been noted, there are sandy coves there.

★ ★ ★

"GREAT SNORING DIVORCE SUIT."
East Anglian Paper.

Readers may make their own comments.

★ ★ ★

A theatrical critic recalls a drama that had its first performance at a matinée and was then withdrawn. So they managed to get the news in the close of play editions.



We read that newspaper-men in Austria are at liberty to write what they like. At the time of writing, that is.

★ ★ ★

"Price wanted for Spouting around House."—*Advt. in N.Z. Paper.*

We don't encourage whales, thank you.

★ ★ ★

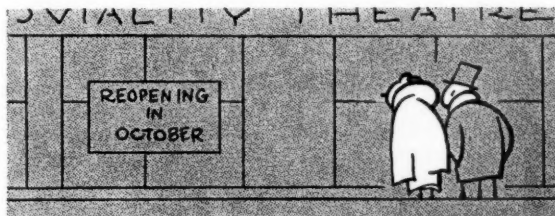
"When I was a lad," says an M.P., "I was caned once by the headmaster—and only once; and that was for telling the truth."

He doesn't say whether it cured him or not.

★ ★ ★

"Who gets time for writing nowadays?" demands a journalist. Forgers.

★ ★ ★



"Why," asks a playwright, "does the modern husband take his wife to a night club instead of to a theatre?" Probably because by the time she's ready it's the only place still open.

★ ★ ★

A racehorse has been named Week-end Guest. It is said to be a stayer.

★ ★ ★

New outlets are being sought for the by-products of the gas industry. We suggest some apt advertising slogan, such as "Eat More Coke."

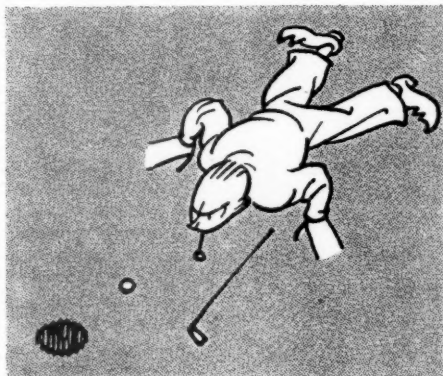
★ ★ ★

"She entered a room two seconds after such a bomb had come through the roof and passed straight out through the window."—*Local Paper.*

And who shall blame her?

★ ★ ★

"There's a lot more in golf than just hitting a little ball," says a professional. There's missing it, for instance.



Idyll of a King

"The new Director-General of the B.B.C., Professor Frederick Wolff Ogilvie, is tall and bowed and gentle.

His face is pear-shaped, and four permanent wrinkles ride across his forehead like little waves breaking on the sand.

He has the mouth of a woman and the chin of a dictator—which betrays his personality perfectly.

Behind an air of courtesy that is quite eighteenth century there is a rock-like will. It would, I fancy, be a pleasure to be fired by him."

A VOICE along the dusty pavements cried
 "This is our new Director-General,"
 And dreaming, yet not dreaming, I beheld
 Sir John's successor, gentle, tall and bowed,
 At the high portals of the B.B.C.
 His face was pear-shaped, not as when a pear,
 Having the podgier portion undermost,
 Hangs from an orchard bough so heavily
 That all men say "This pear is like a head
 Drawn by the pencil of Heath Robinson."
 Not this the sense the writer of the tale
 Intended, I imagine, to convey,
 But pear-shaped as when, after revelry
 And jousting at the Court of Camelot,
 Some lady takes a pear and, holding it
 Not by the stalk but by the larger end
 During dessert, beseeches prettily
 Some gentleman to peel the pear for her,
 Crying "The pear, Sir Fool, Sir Fool, the pear,"
 And he removes the rind and hands it back,
 So, and possessing such a face, I saw
 In dreams our new Director-General.
 And all across his forehead, as when waves,
 The tinier waves that lisp upon the strand
 When the spent billow, wearying of his might,
 Runs gently up to the marine parade,
 Ran little wrinkles—there were four of them—
 The wrinkles of a broad-based policy
 That understands the democratic will,
 But permanent like the waves of women's hair,
 Or those aerial waves that none may see,
 Broken yet breachless. And a woman's lips
 Smiled when he spoke, as seeming to belie
 The presence of a dictatorial chin.
 Not otherwise in force, the countenance
 (Though something oval and more like an egg's
 Than pear-shaped with the semblance of a pear)
 Was that Titanic Knight preceding him,
 And now upholding our immense prestige
 On the Imperial pathways of the sky,
 Or that great Roman who maintains the world
 Against the heathen of the Northern shore,
 And rules Iberia and the Libyan waste.
 In fine he had an air of courtesy
 Belonging to an older world than ours
 In combination with a rock-like will,
 So that I thought, "King Arthur comes again.
 If I were an announcer and the tongue
 Of venomous slander whispered, it would be
 Almost a pleasure to be fired by him."

EVOE.

William's Golden Rule

DEAR GEORGE,—I have struck a blow for the sacred rights of man. It happened like this. Last Sunday in the recreation ground Lucy said I have had my eye on a three piece suite at the Eternity Furnishing, it is a kind of pinky mauvey velvet, are you listening? On and off I said, I was thinking. What again? she said, your poor old brain must be fair wore out. Kindly delete sarcasm and oblige I said, I have been thinking about marriage and am not exactly on the boil over the thoughts I have thought of. If you mean this is the parting of the ways she said, I will go home and try to forget, supper must be ready now anyway, it is shepherds pie.

Lucy Lucy I said, marriage is marriage and shepherds pie is over rated, do not confuse the issue, I have forebodings because every time we go to your house your Mother cries like I do not know what. Thats right she said, throw my Mother in my face. That is the last place I would throw her I said, I am in one of my moods that is all. Oh well she said, there is no more to be said but she didnt mean that so I left her at her gate and said good night is almost a mockery Lucy but I wish you it.

Next evening in the Mitre I was sipping my usual beverage when a little man sat next me and said nice weather. Yes I said, if you like it. You sound disgruntled he said, I was too until I took unto myself a loving wife, are you married? I have entered for the event I said, and will participate on Aug bank holiday if spared. Congratulations he said, same again for this gentleman Miss, welcome to the happy band. It is nice to hear someone speak well of it I said, most people talk about it as if it was the Government. My boy he said, marriage is okeydoke, the trouble is sometimes the wrong people go in for it, are you romantic? Being a plumber I said, I dabble a lot in hot water but am not yet hard boiled. A man of my own kidney he said. No bodily details please I said, they make my blood run hot and cold. It was a metaforicle kidney he said, I have never regretted the day I married Princess Fifi Padoopa.

Well I said, fancy me being stood a beer by a kings son in law. Hardly that he said, Princess Fifi Padoopa was her nom de revue, she was a snake charmer and contortionist when fate threw us together through me finding one of her snakes in the third row of the two and fours, she was Minnie Thripp of Brixton really and became my loving wife, same again Miss. I mention that he said, to prove that even a girl snatched from the glamorous life of snake charming and contortionism can drop into happy married life as easy as falling off of a cliff, here is mud in your eye. And in yours I said, I got my girl through a burst pipe. Another contortionist? he said, pardon my quip. No sooner asked than granted I said. Ah my boy he said, when youve got a loving wife like what I have you get a kick out of life like a mules, marriage cures depression, it is a real bolt from the blues as they say.

Then a lady with a mighty wurlitzer voice came in and said so there you are you little unprintable noun you, come on home or Ill. Pardon me my friend this man said, my loving wife needs me and he went pale and out. Well I thought, if he can say so much pro marriage when his wife is such a con, what ho for the nuptials so I dropped a note to Lucy saying proceed with purchase fears allayed William.

Next Saturday I went to the Tudor Palace with Lucy just before two to put the furniture okay while she hung the curtains and had just got upstairs when up rushed seven men and said the very idea of you tearing yourself to pieces Sir allow me, no allow me, no allow me and they started moving furniture in all directions. Ow I said.



THE JOHN BULLFINCH FANCIER

With Mr. Punch's best wishes for the success of Sir KINGSLEY Wood's new Civil Air Guard.



AT HOME

THE CRICKET ENTHUSIAST

Anything wrong Sir? a man carrying a wardrobe said. No I said, I was only pinching myself to see if I was awake which I find I am, pray proceed. Then Lucy came in and told them where she wanted everything put and they all said only too happy Madam and a little hot man kept running up and down stairs with a mattress saying anywhere you like Madam you have only to say the word.

Well Lucy I said, I have heard of the milk of kindness but I reckon we have the whole cow here, explain do. Shush she said, come into the kitchen, tradesmen kept calling at home to ask if they could supply me so I told them all to call at our home to be at two this afternoon, when they arrived I said I cant decide without the consent of my bethrothed who is now moving furniture so would you mind waiting although I think shifting the piano will prove fatal, then I shall be a unmarried widow and you will get no orders. Then one man said permit me to assist Madam and the others said me too, I thought it would work out like that. Lucy I said, you will make a wonderful manager and I thought so George until that evening at her house when she suddenly came in in her wedding dress. She will carry assorted blooms on the day her Mother said, she is holding the bullrushes from the hall vase just to give you the idea. She looks absolutely ah la I said. Tell him now while hes pliable her Mother said. I have a confession to make re suite Lucy said, I told the manager of the Eternity Furnishing you were lukewarm and he said leave him to me

where can I find him of an evening? so I told him and he said he would pop in and see you on Monday, did he?

I cant chide you when I see you in your wedding dress with the bullrushes in your hand I said, I will only say you may be a good manager but I am now appointing self as Chairman of our concern. An unhappy marriage on top of my poetic nature might lead to anything, remember Shakespeare and Miss Hathaway, they say she won him crafty like by saying Mr. Shakespeare you will marry me or but the marriage was hardly a beano so he took a single ticket to London and wrote plays which was a good thing for the world but a nasty jolt for Miss Hathaway and served her right for being too eager, verb sap.

You wont leave me and go to London and write plays like Shakespeare will you? Lucy said. That is a big thing for a fellow to promise I said, I will undertake not to leave you, as to writing plays like Shakespeare I cant promise because what is within will out but at present I think plumbing has more of a future. Remember that give and take is the golden rule of marriage, if I give you good advice I shall expect you to take it, oh revoor.

Well George I think I have put my foot down in a quiet way. I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend,

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Thanks for the clock, you say it goes for a year without winding but how long will it go for if you do wind it?

Clumps

"THERE'S no need to tell any of you how to play *Clumps*," smilingly observed Mrs. Trevor, and then she told us all how to play *Clumps*.

Well, naturally one realises that one's readers won't need to be told how to play *Clumps*. Players divide into two groups, and think of a—

("But see above.")—EDITOR.)

("Above?"—AUTHOR.)

("About there being no need to tell anybody how to play *Clumps*."—EDITOR.)

("I see. I will begin again."—AUTHOR.)

What you really want for a good game of *Clumps* is a large room. An enormous room. You may have to build one on—you can always use it as an Air-raid Refuge Room afterwards—because no ordinary ball-room or billiard-room is nearly large enough.

(This may be a disappointment to those of you who have been wondering for years what to do with your ball-rooms and billiard-rooms; but never mind. If the worst comes to the worst, you must either give a ball or play billiards.)

Failing this room, you will find *Clumps* failing also.

A recent experience in the Trevors' drawing-room (not a foot over 30 by 45, if that) has convinced me of it.

As usual with drawing-room fun, the initial step was to send two reluctant people—in this case General Battlegate and Aunt Emma—out of the room, where they were comfortably sitting in armchairs, into the hall, where Aunt Emma said there was a draught, and the General walked about rather angrily and said that he supposed an old campaigner was expected to put up with any amount of discomfort.

The rest of us tried to decide what we were going to think about, though what most of us were actually thinking about already good manners forbade us to say aloud.

Then nearly everybody by a curious coincidence suggested Hitler's little finger. And Laura said that was much too obvious, which naturally annoyed everyone. So by another coincidence everybody said, "Then why not Mussolini's little finger?"

"I think we ought to keep politics right out of this," said Mrs. Battlegate very gravely and firmly.

It must have been quite twenty minutes later that Aunt Emma looked in and asked if we were ready.

"Yes," said the Trevors.

"Did you hear what we were just

saying?" cried Laura, the spirit of a keen player again proving too much for discretion.

"Only something about Wimbledon and Mrs. Helen Wills Moody, dear," replied Aunt Emma.

So we had to start all over again, and when we decided to think of Uncle Egbert, it was, as Laura rather unfortunately put it, simply for want of a better idea.

"Now," said Mrs. Trevor, "we divide into two *Clumps*, and each of them asks questions, and it's whoever guesses first."

She escorted Aunt Emma to one end of the room, and I could see the General



1968: A FORECAST

MR. BURGIN. "TUT-TUT! I'VE CLEAN FORGOTTEN WHERE I PUT THAT NICE LITTLE TRAFFIC REPORT THAT BRESSEY MADE FOR ME."

settling down at the other end—and for the matter of that I could hear him too.

"What kind of questions?" said Aunt Emma, looking wretched.

Mrs. Trevor explained. There could be no doubt that she now knew the whole thing off by heart.

So poor Aunt Emma kept on saying things like "Is it abstract?" "Is it concrete?" and "Oh dear!"

What instructions Mr. Trevor had given to the General one had no means of knowing, but he could distinctly be heard roaring at the other *Clump*, "Is it useful?"

"Yes," said Uncle Egbert.

"No," said everybody else, in the tones of people deliberately wishing to obtain a cheap laugh.

"Good heavens," Uncle Egbert cried, "where do you suppose the garden would be without—"

"The garden? It's the hose!" dramatically exclaimed Aunt Emma, who up to then had been following quite a different clue of her own, which was rapidly leading her to—I think—Hitler's little finger.

"No, it isn't the hose," we said.

"Pay no attention to them, Aunt Emma—just go on with your own questions."

"Then it's a person, not a thing at all!" bellowed the General.

"A person?" said Aunt Emma. "Oh, then it isn't the hose."

In naming Hitler she beat the General by the merest fraction, but he romped home well ahead of her two seconds later with Mussolini.

Laura, on whom the mention of these distinguished harbingers of peace seemed to have the worst possible effect, explained that we weren't thinking of any well-known public character at all.

"That's as may be," Uncle Egbert said rather sharply from the other end of the room.

"Perhaps it's not a person at all. Is it pussy?" Aunt Emma inquired fondly.

"Try," said Mrs. Trevor, "to find out the nature of the thought. For instance, whether it's abstract or—"

"I've asked that several times already," Aunt Emma replied piteously, "and I can't remember which you said."

Then the General, evidently hot on the trail, was heard again.

"A man over sixty, with a bald head and smokes a pipe?"

"Mr. Baldwin!" shrieked Aunt Emma.

"Aunt Emma, you must *not* listen to the others. Try to ask questions—"

The General was now forging ahead.

"In this house?"

"Yes."

"In this room?"

"Yes."

("He's got it," said Charles.)

But the General was evidently determined to leave nothing to chance.

"Does his name begin with E?"

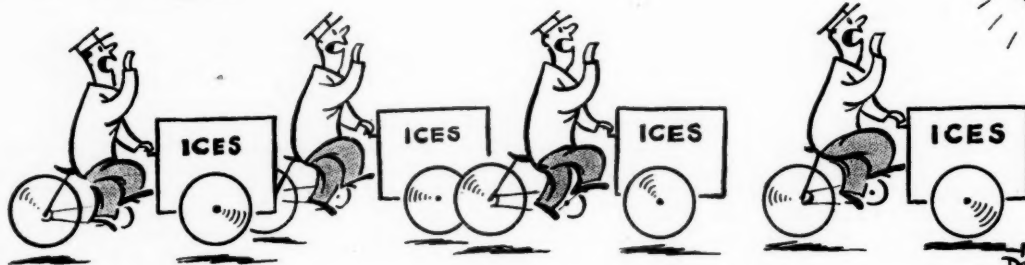
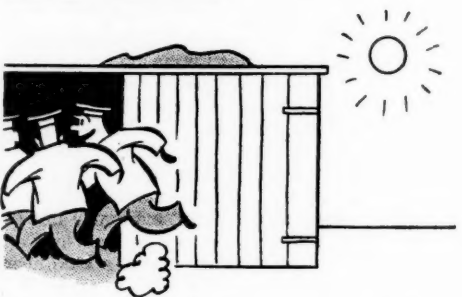
"Yes," cried everybody, and one prepared to applaud heartily, and General Battlegate prepared to acknowledge the applause. And then Aunt Emma in a triumphant scream said—

"I've guessed it! It's your Uncle Egbert!"

The point thus raised was long the subject of discussion. Anyway, it was for the rest of that evening. And Aunt Emma hasn't yet accepted the explanation that was offered by so many of those present, and by none more forcibly than by General Battlegate.

E. M. D.

"Pokers, Soldiers"



DAVID
LANGDON

OUR Adjutant has recently received another of Those Letters. This time it is all about "Pokers, Soldiers" and we are seriously beginning to suspect the existence in the War Office of a secret department subtly working for the maintenance of peace. It does this by composing and vicariously issuing a lot of unconsciously humorous orders and letters whenever our relations with another power are becoming strained, the idea being that the other power promptly realises it simply can't contemplate war with a country whose Army can in all seriousness spend its time producing orders like that.

For instance, you may remember that just when England and Turkey were at loggerheads in Chanak the following letter, marked "Urgent," was suddenly received by all Commanding Officers:—

"Sir, I am directed to inform you that it has been represented that younger children attending Army Infants School would derive considerable benefit by reclining on the class-room floors during the rest period in the afternoon, and it has been suggested that unserviceable blankets on the scale of one for every two such children should be provided. It is further suggested that the blankets should be brushed and shaken regularly and washed not more than once a year . . ."

Or when relations were strained with Italy, this ostensible Army Council Instruction appeared:—

"No. 299. *Identity Discs—length of cord.*

1. With reference to A.C.I. 215 of 1931, the length of the "neck cord" to be attached to No. 1 green identity disc, which was previously 42 inches, has been reduced to 32 inches . . ."

And, of course, we feel certain that the Anglo-German tension over Czecho-Slovakia was really dispelled by a letter apparently written by the Director-General of the Army Medical Service to every General in the Army—No. 26/Stationery/5873—which can't very well be quoted here but was an absolute beauty.

Well, this latest one is designed, we think, for the present Spanish situation. The subject, as I said, is "Pokers, Soldiers"; for you must know that in the Army we don't just have pokers. We have "Pokers, Soldiers" and "Pokers, Officers", Steel," and "Pokers, Officers', Brass Handled," and "Pokers, Bakers, 6 ft. irons," and probably you'd find "Pokers, Red-hot Artificial, Army Pantomimes for use in," if you knew just where to look. The effusion came under the guise of a Brigade Order, and went like this:—

"POKERS—SOLDIERS". Vide Barrack and Hospital Schedules, 1937, Schedule 23, Pokers, Soldiers', are authorised at certain stations at the scale of 1 per fireplace."

The circumstances in which pokers were authorised for these stations only are not known and it is thought that in view of the fact coal is issued for one fireplace per quarter only, a scale of 1 per fireplace is too generous. It is also thought that as pokers are authorised at certain stations, they may also be necessary at other stations where fireplaces exist.

Os. C. Units will forward a report on the pro forma published as an Annexure to this Order to Bde. H.Q.

The pro forma lived up to the promise of the order. It had nine columns: "1. Number of Pokers held under B. & H. Schedule 23. 2. Suggested Scale. 3. Numbers Req'd. to Complete (to Col. 2.). 4. Number that could be surrendered. 5. Financial Effect: Rate (each poker). 6. Initial Cost. 7. Estimated Life. 8. Recurring Cost. 9. Remarks."

Well, you see what I mean. We're certain it'll have a good effect on the international situation. Though it only arrived a week ago, it's already had a considerable effect on our Adjutant. For the Adjutant is conscientious, and moreover just loves an argument—preferably about a "nice point." So he first ascertained that the battalion barrack-rooms, though each possessing two fireplaces, were only allowed one poker per room, and then sent the document off to the Quarter-Master, tentatively suggesting that one more poker per room would be beneficial. I need hardly point out that if he'd found the barrack-rooms possessed two pokers he would promptly have suggested that one less would be beneficial. As I said, he just loves an argument.

He certainly got it.

The Quarter-Master, Captain Ledger, responded at once by indignantly pointing out that only one Poker, Soldiers', per room was authorised. A Barrack Schedule was a Barrack Schedule, he concluded sternly, though he made it sound more like a Bible. The Adjutant said soothingly, yes, he quite understood, but didn't Captain Ledger think an extra poker was *necessary*? A poker and the other concomitant fire-irons were definitely as much part of a fireplace, as, say, fenders, of which there were two per room.

Ledger evidently spent some time closeted with books, because he didn't write till the following day and then to say he could nowhere trace any authority for "Irons, Fire, Concomitant," and just how were they used, please? In any case coal was only issued for one fire per room and therefore only *one* Poker, Soldiers', was necessary. The Adjutant must know the fight that would ensue if two soldiers tried to poke one fire simultaneously; temptation had thus been definitely removed.

The Adjutant answered that rows were just as likely to start if one soldier tried to give advice on how a fire should be poked to the soldier who was doing it, and that it was merely fair the intervener should have a poker himself, if only for self-defence.

Ledger replied with a curt note accusing the Adjutant of irregular logic. Did he seriously suggest that a separate Poker, Soldiers', should be provided for every soldier who had theories about how a fire should be poked? In that case one Poker, Soldiers', ought to be provided for every soldier in the barrack-room, which was absurd. One Poker, Soldiers', per one Fire, Barrack-room, was the rule, and coal for only one fire per barrack-room was provided.

But there was nothing, pointed out the Adjutant in reply, to say which fireplace the one fire was to be in. If the troops liked in common fairness to have the fire at alternate ends of the room on alternate days, it would mean



that the poker was always at the other end when first wanted. Or suppose even that the troops decided to go without fires for half the winter and have two going simultaneously for the other half, there would thus be two simultaneous fires for which Ledger had admitted that two pokers were allowable. Fire-warmed, in short, he added cleverly, should be fire-ironed.

Ledger at once retorted that the Adjutant had quoted the proverb wrongly: it should be "Forewarned is fore-armed," and he didn't see what the hell that had got to do with the issue of Pokers, Soldiers'.

This rather staggered the Adjutant and he called the R.S.M. into conference. The R.S.M. later reported that in about half the barrack-rooms the Poker, Soldiers', was missing and the troops—he blushed to say it—apparently used their bayonets. In the other half of the rooms the scale of Pokers, Soldiers', appeared to be one per fireplace, their occupants being evidently opportunists. One of these pokers was missing, but had just been discovered, with a newspaper wrapped round it, in the possession of our Private Sling, who for some weeks had had a feud with a camp of gipsies down the road, and had always been observed to "walk out" very studiously with a copy of *The Times* under his arm.

The matter rests there at the moment, though we understand the Adjutant is now writing to *Punch*, enclosing a certified copy of the word "Annexure" for the information of the General Officer Commanding in the Word War.

But peace, we hope, will reign in Europe.

A. A.

Heaven a Hoarding

Extract from Haddock's "Mystery Of Our Own Time."—Vol. 1.

IN 1938 new and immense advances were made in the conquest of the air. Aeroplanes became bigger, speedier and noisier. Heroic feats were dared and done. One man flew the Atlantic by accident. Another flew round the top half of the world after dinner. All the peoples of Europe were linked together by swift and regular air-services. The relations of the nations were never better. Peace and understanding seemed to follow in the wake of the loud exhausts. The airman, flashing over Holland at 250 miles an hour, looked down upon the little country with a new comprehension of its people and its problems. The Dutchmen, deafened by his passing, looked up with a new respect and fellow-feeling for the traveller, realising for the first time that, after all, all men are brothers. Even in Barcelona, even in Canton, the ignorant populace muttered to each other that, whatever the temporary inconveniences

it might bring, the new engine proclaimed the dawn of a nobler civilisation. The fetters of space and time were stricken from the limbs and soul of man. Aunts in London were united in a single hour to nieces in Brussels who did not want to see them. Yesterday's London papers were sold in New York City to reluctant Americans who had too many papers to read already. Business men, flying comfortably from one capital to another, were enabled to complete in a few hours transactions for which they were previously compelled to use a postcard or the telephone. It still took half-an-hour to get from Ludgate Circus to Trafalgar Square.

★ ★ ★

On individuals, as on the nations, the influence of the aeroplane was strong and beneficial. So much time was saved by men of business that they did twice as much business as before, and yet had more time for reading and listening to good music. A new restfulness was noticed on the lined faces of Lombard and Throgmorton Streets. The ordinary citizens too, released

from the tiresome delays of travel by land and water, faced the labours of life with a new lightness of heart and spirit. The thought that at any moment, if he liked, he could fly to the United States of America, brought peace and contentment to the miner at the coal-face and the fireman sweating by the furnace door. So much new time was, as it were, set free for philosophical reflection and the pursuit of art and culture that, the demand creating the supply, new SHAKESPEARES, HANDELS, GAINSBOROUGHS and JOHNSONS cropped up in every village. The Aeroplane Age revealed itself as the Age of Art.

★ ★ ★

Meanwhile, the world of commerce had not failed to perceive the possibilities of the new boon. It was not yet possible to sell goods physically from the aeroplane, but sales could be stimulated, the next best thing. The sky, for advertising purposes, had obvious advantages over the hoarding on the wayside field. No citizen could be compelled to travel by road or rail. Some are difficult to reach even through a newspaper. But there is no man so humble or retiring that he does not, from time to time, glance at the sky, or cannot be compelled to look up by the making of a loud noise just over his head. Advertisements already were almost ubiquitous: by the new device they could be made unavoidable.

The simple populace, trained to applaud, or accept, anything which bore the unmistakable marks of Progress, were dutifully delighted or dumb. Many, indeed, had for long, though unconsciously, rebelled against the old-fashioned blankness of the sky, empty but for clouds, birds, stars, and all that trash. Now they could look up and see above St. Paul's messages of hope and promise such as had never appeared in the dull blue vault of heaven before—golden messages about their stomachs or their teeth, their acidity or their underwear—

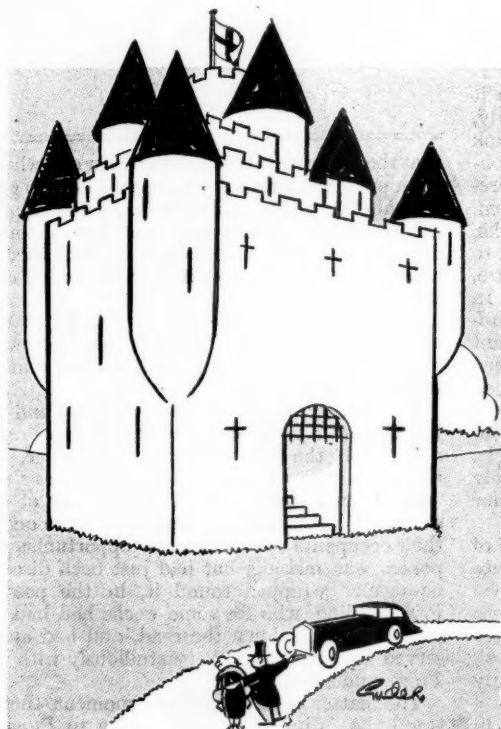
BROLO BANS BILE

OR

WHY HAVE GREEN TEETH?

★ ★ ★

But in 1938 the new technique was still in infancy. Those aeroplanes which wandered above the big towns and crowded places, trailing across the sky the last specific for anaemia or indigestion, were still less numerous than those which practised the dropping of bombs or the avoidance of shrapnel.



"ALL MY LIFE I'VE LONGED TO BUILD YOU A PLACE LIKE THIS, ROSIE, AND AT LAST MY DREAM HAS COME TRUE."



"YOU PLAY YOUR SHOT, COLONEL. I'LL FINISH THE STORY AFTER."

In 1939 Commerce conquered the sky. The bombers gave way to the bilious. Vast fleets of advertising aircraft darkened the sun by day and at night made meaningless the stars. The heavens became a cosmic hoarding.

Two innovations now added to the effectiveness of the advertisement and the pleasure of the people. In the past the advertising aeroplane had been compelled, like a street singer, to "keep moving." Now the hovering helicopter was called to the service, and the alimetary message of the moment remained stationary in the sky, above or near the Test Match, Regatta or Race-meeting. Further, it was found worth while to have a helicopter or two permanently in position (subject to the necessary reliefs) outside the upper stories of the vast new blocks of flats which were then being erected everywhere. So that, in addition to the enjoyment of every modern convenience and luxury that their landlords could think of, the tenants, as they bathed, dressed, or shaved, were invited, through their window, to use all kinds of tooth-pastes, shaving-creams, fountain-pens, purgatives and furniture-

polishes which had hitherto been kept from them.

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The second innovation was the systematic and scientific use of the human voice in air publicity and propaganda. Increasing numbers of the citizens, it was found, gradually became insensitive to the innumerable writings on the wall of the universe. Even the loudest aeroplane was unable to make them think properly about their livers and the one and only remedy. But the loud speaker, continually advertising from the helicopter, could be ignored by none. However abstracted the poet, however devoted the lover, however anxious the statesman or man of affairs, however remote the vale, wood, backwater or garden in which men rested or reflected, they were bound to lend an attentive ear when a deep voice boomed from the firmament—

WHAT DO YOU DO ABOUT YOUR
BOWELS?

or

DOES YOUR SWEETHEART SHUN YOU?

OR
HAVE YOU A HAIRY CHEST?

OR
TAKE THE TEETH OUT AT NIGHT!
OR
BATE YOUR BREATH WITH BALMO
or even—

VOTE FOR WIMSHURST

This was the final chapter in the heroic story of the Conquest of the Air. Thereafter the people lived in caves, and ventured out on foggy nights only when it was difficult to see the vast letters writ across the stars.

HOW IS YOUR DUODENUM?
TAKE DENAX—OR DIE!

A. P. H.

"If a dog has totohache he cannot tell one all about it."—Article in Local Paper.
He just waggles his foot.

"I was interested to read of a modern baby's first words in a reader's letter.

Among the first words learnt by my own nephew was 'hygienic,' and now, at the age of three years, he definitely knows the meaning of it."—Letter to "Daily Sketch."

Among the first words we learnt was "rats!"



HER PEOPLE

THOMAS
DERRICK



HIS PEOPLE

Perversity

It's strange, I know, but when I chance to meet
A piper piping mournful Gaelic dirges,
Marching in muddy spats down Jermyn Street,
The Scottish in my veins distinctly surges.

I see the softly sloping purple hill,
The crags where golden eagles swoop to nest,
The burns where deer may drink their cooling fill,
The brackened banks where grouse delight to nest.

My very soul is racked with a lament
For heathered places where I love to roam,
My urban lungs and limbs cry discontent,
My heart is in the Highlands, 'tis my home!

But on the other hand, when comes the autumn
And I am on the hills I love so well,
Battered and drenched I wonder why I thought 'em
Anything but a purple patch of hell!

The heather, like an octopus entwining,
Clutches me as I battle for my breath,
The brackish bog in which I am reclining
Seems such a slow (though welcome) way to death.



Nicholas Pagan

"LADY SMITH?"

'Tis then I have an urge to put my furs on,
To creep into some velvet picturedrome;
They beckon me, the Gaumont and the Curzon,
My heart is in the Empire, 'tis my home! V. G.

With Regret

DEAR PERCIVAL,—It is kind of you to ask me to play tennis next Tuesday with you and Mr. and Mrs. Prendergast and the two Manning girls. At least I suppose it will be the same old lot? I have played tennis at your place perhaps half-a-dozen times in the last six years and I do not recall any occasion on which Mr. and Mrs. Prendergast were not there, ably supported by the two Manning girls. Don't you know anyone else who plays tennis? Or is it that you don't know anyone else who is willing to play tennis with me? I am not suggesting for a moment that they are not delightful people to meet both on and off the court. In fact I can recall many interesting discussions with Mrs. Prendergast as to which side of the court suited her best in a mixed double, and the Manning girls are so amusing about playing up at the net—particularly Frances, who is never quite certain, is she? whether she is better right up or on the base line and always compromises by standing on the service line. Old Prendergast is fun too, with his odd 'pre-war racket and that sash-thing round his waist. Of course he can't run as he used to in the 'nineties, but it's wonderful what he gets to at the net. Hardly a ball reaches his partner at the back of the court that he hasn't at least managed to touch. He takes a close personal interest, one might say, in every stroke.

I mention these good people because I don't want you to think I am refusing your invitation (as I fear I must) because of the company you keep. My own ineptitude at the game debars me, as you know, from criticising the play even of Felicity Manning, who after all does at times put over a kind of short-arm scoop surprising enough to beat a more knowledgeable performer than her sister or either of the Prendergasts. And if you can stand the conversation at tea-time, why then so, I suppose, can I. So, you see, I should come along gladly and take my medicine as I have done for the last six years, if it were not that circumstances have arisen which make it quite impossible. The fact is that I have developed tennis-elbow and have to take things easy for a bit.

I got it, really, at the Fosters—do you know them? He is something—not much, but something—in the City and she wears a kind of purple toque you may have noticed sometimes in church. There is an Aunt, too, who doesn't play, and a French governess for the children, who serves over-arm of all things. Anyway, I was playing there, and Foster hit one of those high lobs while my partner and I were jockeying for position at the net. I rushed back and just managed to get to the ball and hit it sideways over an oak-tree at the corner of the kitchen-garden, but, owing to my speed, could not prevent myself colliding with the stop-netting at the back of the court.

When I got up I found to my annoyance that the buckle at the back of my trousers was caught in the net, a thing that would never have happened if the net had been of proper tarred cord instead of the thin stuff one uses for raspberries. Unfortunately, while I was reaching round to the small of my back, my foot slipped on the dry turf and naturally, in the position I was then adopting with my back arched and both hands behind me, I was unable to keep my balance. I clutched at the net to save myself,



"I SHALL BE ALL RIGHT WHEN THE SEA GOES DOWN."

but the supporting stakes were not strong enough and the whole affair came down on top of me, one of the stakes catching me a sharp blow on the elbow as it descended.

The pain was excruciating but the humiliation was even worse, for I found on attempting to rise that I was firmly pinioned fore and aft. My legs which had been crossed as I fell were held securely in that position by the netting, one of my arms was jammed behind my back and the position of the other somewhere at right angles to my left hip led me at first to believe that it had been wrenched clean off at the shoulder. Add to this the fact that my racket had in some way fallen beneath me and threatened to disembowel me at every movement and you will understand something of the mortification I had to endure. I was obliged to lie there, snapping feebly at the string which covered my face, until help should arrive.

This was not long in coming, for the other players naturally ran to assist me, and Foster, whose impetuosity will one day, I hope, ruin him on the Stock Exchange, laid hold of the netting and pulled.

"Leggo!" I screamed.

"What's up?" he asked. "Got to get you out."

"My nose," I said. "You're killing me."

"Golly, yes!" he said. "It's gone all retroussé. Did you fall on it?"

"You're pulling it up, you fool," I said savagely. "Can't you see it's caught in the mesh?"

They got me out at last, with a pair of scissors, and Foster was very nice about his net, I must say. But I am not the man I was. My arm is still very sore and I have lost a good deal of confidence. You know how important

confidence is on the tennis-court. Where would Perry have been without it?

So I am afraid I must refuse your very kind invitation, with the deepest regret. I love a game of tennis, and I can never forget the pleasant chats I have had with Mr. and Mrs. Prendergast and the two Manning girls. But this year it is not to be. Even if it were possible for me to hold a racket, I do not think I could face another appearance on a tennis court for a little time yet; the sight of netting of any kind gives me a sort of suffocating feeling as if I were a mackerel or some sort of skate. I suppose doctors would call it a phobia. Anyway there it is. I hope I am not letting you down badly. After all, if you can't get anybody else, five is not a bad number. That will be just one ball each, won't it?

Yours apologetically,

H. F. E.

By a Student of International Affairs.

"APPEAL TO BACK OF COURT."

Mr. Harrison said that people, in filling in their tickets, did not know what horses jockeys were riding, and were unaware even if the jockeys were the British plan, according to Reuter messages to-day.

In Italy it has created a favourable impression, but Berlin and Paris are riding that week."—*North Country Paper*.

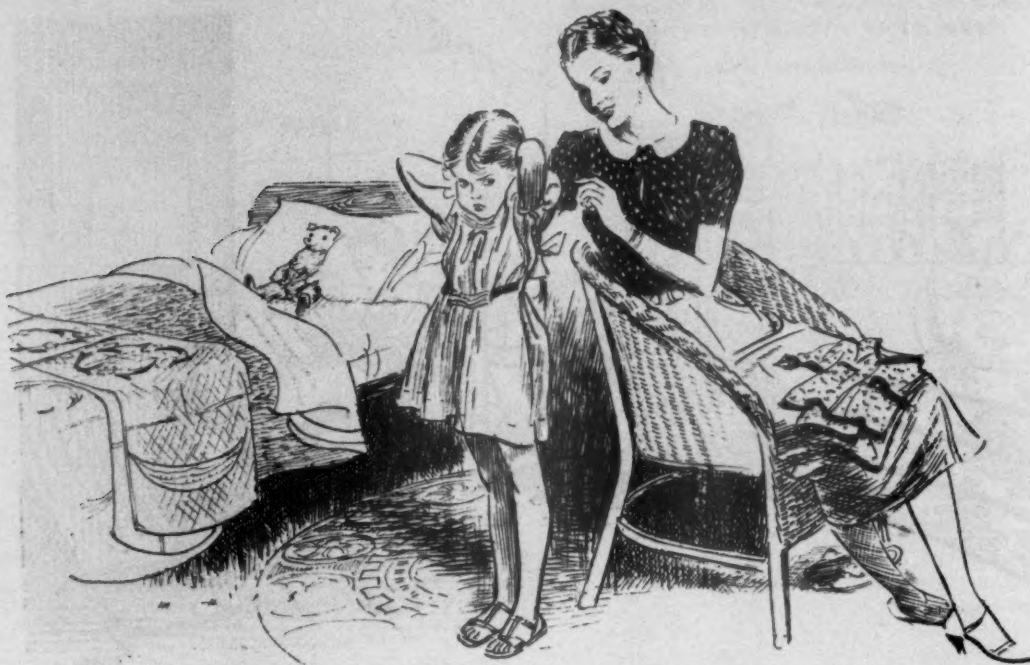
"THE PUBLIC MORALITY COUNCIL:

It aims to suppress bogus night clubs, strip-tease and nudity in the theatre.

It reviews plays and films. It reads questionable literature."

From a Parish Magazine.

Just as a relaxation.



"MUMMY, WHY DO YOU MAKE MY DRESS FASTEN AT THE BACK WHEN I'M AT THE FRONT?"

The Perfect Guest

(With apologies to R-s- H-n-n-k-r-H--t-n).

SHE asked if she could bring her dog,
A mongrel puppy called King Zog.
We said, "Of course, my dear, what fun!"
And met a train at ten to one.
King Zog was sick in our new car,
We said, "How priceless puppies are!"
At lunch we really had to laugh,
He bit the butler in the calf,
And then, to make the joke complete,
Aspired to take the Bishop's seat.
He soon endeared himself to all
By chasing every tennis-ball
And getting tangled in the net
And chewing it, the little pet!
And later stripping rich Aunt Grace
Of half a yard of Brussels lace;
He also ate the King of Clubs
And misapplied the drawing-room shrubs.

Next day King Zog was still more sweet,
He stole the Nursery joint of meat
And laid it in a clever ditch
He'd fashioned on the cricket pitch;
He fell into the swimming-pool
And made poor George look such a fool

Having to jump in fully clothed
When bathing was *the* thing he loathed.
We laughed until we thought we'd die;
And then, before King Zog was dry,
He played his most endearing jest
That made him quite the super guest.
He found a starling, very dead,
Took it to Lady Mary's bed
And wrapped it in her evening frock,
Then rolled upon the two, *en bloc*.
We rolled about almost as much
With glee at such a brilliant touch,
And when we all went out next day
To see the angel drive away,
We kissed his nose and stroked his ears,
And Lady Mary was in tears,
And rich Aunt Grace made such a fuss,
To think that he was leaving us,
And one and all implored our friend
To stay with them for next week-end.

A Frenchman who was staying here
Thought our behaviour very queer,
"Treating a puppy like a god"—
But then of course the French *are* odd.

M. D.



A CASTLE IN SPAIN

Neville. "Couldn't you be a little more helpful, Ben?"





"THEN THERE WAS THAT YOUNG ASTRONOMER; HE WANTED TO DISCOVER NEW WORLDS FOR ME."

Deadly Warfare

Now whatever is the use of having a cricket-match between the Residents and the Visitors? I certainly don't want to play in it.

In any case we are not staying at Worplegate. Yes, I know some people say it is the Yule end of Worplegate, but I say it is the Worplegate end of Yule. And this match is for Worplegate.

Besides, I am not going to play cricket against people who dislike us so much that they wear black on Sundays to show they are not on holiday themselves.

I have never been the last visitor left in this place, but I should think it must be dreadful. All the residents waiting to come out of quarantine the moment you have gone.

I was once the first to arrive, and that was bad enough.

Instead of greeting me like an early crocus, children went scampering home all out of breath to shout, "Oh, Mum, I've seen one!"

Then their mothers put down what they were doing and went to the window, with their aprons lifted to their mouths, to see me walk by with my bag. As if the town had fallen into the hands of the enemy. I don't know what they'd do without us anyway. And that's another thing that annoys me. These hot-faced women who never have time to serve you properly with tea. I do hate the way they scoop up the bread-crumbs and the tips all together, without even saying "Thank you." If they don't want customers they shouldn't open at all. As a matter of fact I don't know why these residents live at the seaside. Do you notice they actually keep their windows shut all the summer, because if they had them open people would think they were visitors?

I am not saying the visitors are everything. Far from it. I say it is no use playing each other at cricket. As a matter of fact I expect the average resident spends the summer feeling like the only sober man at a drunken party. And what would annoy me more than anything if I were a resident is the way the visitors will claim some

little cove as "theirs," and resent anybody else sitting in it. I heard some people this morning saying, "Oh, there's some dreadful woman sitting on my rock! Well, what impertinence!" I daresay the dreadful woman was a resident who had regarded that as her rock for twenty-five years but could only go and sit on it on Saturdays.

No, I will not go up to the Rectory Field and watch.

* * * * *

Well, there are more people here than I thought. I can't imagine why. They have the most extraordinary one-day matches at the Oval sometimes, and the only people who watch them are relations.

I'll tell you what I noticed coming up the hill.

The residents all walking slowly, as if they knew the exact time it would take them and what pace was best. And the visitors, chattering nineteen to the dozen, walking with linked arms, the outside people leaning in to hear what the inside people said, and the



"GOOD LORD, MAN! DON'T YOU KNOW THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A DRAGON AND A CROCODILE?"

inside people trying to keep their balance under the pressure from the outside.

They started off at a hell of a stride and then were passed by the residents in the last twenty yards.

Do you realise that all the women who live here carry sunshades? Their idea is to get out of the sun. The visitors want to get in it.

I must say I think the residents are coming out of the cricket rather better. I suppose they all know each other. The visitors are a very scratch lot. They were only got together yesterday. I daresay one or two of them are really rather good, but nobody knows it, so they will go in last and won't be asked to bowl. The fellow who got up the side is keeping wicket.

I wonder why the fellow who gets up the side is always the worst! I suppose he would never be in a side if he didn't get it up.

I think some of the residents are rather pompous. Their umpire seems to think he's one of the side. He is extremely biased. It doesn't work out quite fairly either, because the visitors' umpire is not on their side at all. I think he has taken offence

because he wasn't asked to play. He is going to give as many of them out as he can. Fancy standing out there in the sun all day, then being grumbled at by both sides. Of course it is a great leveller, a game like this. I must say that. You do see what people are worth.

That fellow who has been standing about on the beach all the week like a mahogany statue and never going into the sea at all is making a perfect ass of himself in the slips. The best of their side, as far as I can see, is the old boy with the moustache that looks as though it had been blown on. He's got five children down here, but he does know how to bat. He might have whitened his boots, though.

I don't know how that fellow dare turn up in grey flannel bags when he can see perfectly well what everybody else is wearing. He had heaps of time to go home and change while they were kicking about here waiting. The local parson is rather nice-looking.

My, that was a crack! I've noticed that fellow on the pier. I thought he looked a cricketer. No, I do *not* know how a fellow "looks" a cricketer on

the pier. He either does or he doesn't. It is nothing to do with his blazer. Anyway, that chap bowling *doesn't*. Oh, well, he's got him out.

As a matter of fact he got himself out. Silly ass.

You know, it's just occurred to me that the people who play for the Residents here must play for the Visitors when *they* go away. That's rather funny, isn't it? I wonder what sort of places they go to. I wonder what they think of the residents there. Actually, I daresay they feel rather proud of living here all the year, considering we all want to come and stay here for our holidays. I wonder how often they get a match like this. Whenever anyone suggests it probably. They're always ready to take it on.

It's really rather nice, you know, when you look round.

They do seem very friendly.

The residents doing the honours and passing round the cakes and the visitors taking a polite interest for the first time in the famous landmarks.

I wish I knew whether we *are* at the Worplegate end of Yule. I've a good mind to get up a side and offer to play Yule.

A Mystery

THERE are a lot of things I should like to know about the affair, such as why the old man with the white beard should be carted off to gaol and what the quarrel had been about between the young fellow with the dark moustache and the girl with the extremely pale hair. Was she annoyed because he thought her brother had done something he had not done and which had really been done by the man with the white beard? If so, what was it?

I must say that the brother had the kind of face that would go with almost any sort of crime. Weak, pitifully weak. Just the type to be led astray by a man with a white beard and one of those falsely genial expressions that so easily mislead the innocent.

On the other hand I want to be perfectly fair to the man with the white beard because I have no absolute proof that he was guilty of any crime at all, and everybody knows that the mere fact of being carted off to gaol (especially in America) is no proof of guilt, otherwise there would be no use for all those clever lawyers who so brilliantly get people acquitted by asking leading questions and objecting to everything the district attorney says and suddenly producing new bits of evidence like pieces of cheese and old boots.

Of course the old man with the white beard may have been the real hero of the affair, and I should not be at all surprised if he turned out to be the long-lost father of the girl with the very pale hair and her brother, or else of the man with the dark moustache. In which case of course he must have had a past which he would sooner go to the gallows than reveal, because if it were known that he was really the 'Frisco murderer of '99 and that the g.w.p.h. or the m.w.b.m. was his child the neighbours naturally wouldn't call.

On the other hand the quarrel between the young people may not have had anything at all to do with the old man with the white beard. It is quite likely that the brunette with the sarcastic smile may have organised the quarrel in order to attach the young man to herself. She looked quite capable of it.

But the most puzzling thing of all is what they were all doing in full evening-dress in broad daylight on horseback in what looked very much like Arizona, although it may have been Central Park. The policeman's parting remark to the young man with the black moustache was also a shade

enigmatical, but then at our local cinema, owing to a defective sound apparatus, only the most practised listeners can make out the speeches.

"Grrrr, nuffin hocey bluff," said the policeman with a coy glance at the girl.

"Spricker putch guddle beer," replied the girl with a toss of the head. And then the most amazing thing of all happened. The policeman kissed her. Why did he kiss her? He looked too young to be her father, even if the man with the white beard is omitted from our calculations, and he could not be her sweetheart because that privilege belonged to the young man with the black moustache. Probably he was

her brother, which would make the old man his father.

It is all very worrying and I don't suppose I shall ever know the truth, but this sort of problem is bound to crop up when you go to the pictures just to see the big film and arrive in time to see the last three minutes of the second attraction.

"The Treasury, on the recommendation of the Import Duties Advisory Committee, have issued the Import Duties (Drawback) (No. 10) Order 1938 (S. R. & O. 1938, No. 652) increasing the rate of drawback in respect of Chewing Gum."—*Board of Trade Journal*.
Will there be any risk to the teeth?



"THIS IS GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME, BILL. THEY'RE ONLY SHOWERS."

At the Circus

"INTERNATIONAL CIRCUS" (COLISEUM)

I SHOULD like to speak highly of NINO, THEODORE and CLEMENT. Unfortunately I soon lost track of who was who, so they must share their honours collectively. They are distinctly funny men. One of their best turns is a musical trio in which they play what I took to be an oboe, a guitar and a cornet; the third instrument, at any rate, is a big brass thing covered with so many knobs and levers that it resembles the handle-bars of a very old motor-cycle. Out of this one of the three coaxes noises which have to be heard to be believed, very deep, rumbling solemn noises that seem to have neither beginning nor end and have the curious property of appearing to come to life inside the ear. The tuning of the guitar makes a noise like a salmon-reel in action, and when its fevered strings finally explode it is found to have been stuffed with sausages. Simple humour, I can hear you saying, but NINO, THEODORE and CLEMENT invest it with a sublimity all their own.

One of them has a fearful habit of shooting water out of his eyes in a way which would make a Hollywood sob-sister look very small beer. Their mock bull-fighting ballet is as good as their mock conjuring, and their properties include an overcoat lined with an octave of little instruments with bellows, so that when the wearer strikes his bosom and leans against things a low, muttering carillon comes out from nowhere. They are given two separate innings, and deserve them more than many cricket teams I know.

MICHAEL KONCEL's Sea-Lions (with their attendant nippies) are a most talented shoal. It is only another instance of the inscrutability of Nature that she has equipped an animal which in its native element never sees a ball from one year's end to another with an eye which would slip any human games-player straight into the international class. MICHAEL KONCEL's troupe can catch on their noses a speck

no bigger than a rackets-ball, thrown right across the stage, and they never miss. Their sense of balance is lovely, and while it would probably be excessive to claim that their ears are as accurate as their eyes, the fact remains that one of them gives a dashing performance on a xylophone made of bulb-horns, which he plays with his nose. It occurred to me to wonder where visiting sea-lions pass their nights. Can a stretch of the Serpentine be hired, or are the animals content in lock-up

appearance of having seen the script) there are five turns with horses, the most spectacular CARL HAGENBECK's, whose animals shuffled themselves, as if they were cards, into colours and numbers, and the most amusing that of LES GIOVANNIS, in which a couple from the audience (but who had also seen the script), went on to the stage in ordinary clothes and played the fool brilliantly on two vast beasts.

Of the other acrobats I liked best THE GREAT MAGYAR TROUPE, whose pleasure it is to operate see-saw jumping-boards in series. Double-somersaults are child's-play to them, and the heaviest of their number, jumping on to a see-saw, propels a girl four-men-high where she balances on the top man's shoulders.

IDA MAY's "FOUR SYLPHIDES," who are molar hangers-on of note, give an amusing little aerial ballet as butterflies wearing phosphorescent wings and flying round on a wheel. Whenever I see people biting bits of rubber in the roof I wonder what the Dentists Annual Congress have to say about this aspect of their professional responsibilities.

Mr. OSCAR's elephants are extremely well trained, but personally I get no pleasure from watching intelligent animals made fools of by being dolled up with evening frocks and parasols. Whether the elephant ever forgets or not, he is too dignified, too wise and too good-natured for such a travesty. I am never altogether happy about the two clever poodles of the GAUDSMITH BROTHERS, which are also

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"Flower-pot thrower wanted; accustomed to throwing all sizes; works, 20 miles from Glasgow."—*Advt. in "Scotsman."*

Come, come—if you want a superman, say so.



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Not to mention the kicking mule (whose would-be conquerors gave every



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Ascribes the beauty
Of her skin
To unremitting
Nightly use
Of Puddle's Extract
Well rubbed in.
That well-known hostess,
Countess Creels,
Owes her allure
(and her success)
Entirely to her
Daily meals
Of crisp marshmallow

Fried in cress.
And Suzan Splitz,
The wonder child,
Gains health and charm
From Coddled Groats,
While actress-playwright
Lucy Wild
Owes hers, she swears,
To Breakfast Oats.

This may be so;
I only know
That, since they offer samples free,
I've tried the lot—and look at me!

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One of those Stories

Cartwright signalled the boy to bring him another whisky-and-soda, which, needless to say, the boy did on noiseless feet. Then he re-lit his pipe and settled himself more comfortably in his armchair. Having thus completed the tiresome but essential preliminaries, he embarked on his tale.

"In all my experience," he began, "I can think of nothing so terrifying as the time I was locked in a room with a wounded black widow. A black widow spider," he added hastily. "Never as long as I live shall I forget the horror of that moment. But perhaps I ought to begin at the beginning." "Why?" asked a very young member.

Cartwright took no notice.

"It was in the autumn of 'eighty-eight," he began, "that I first met Lady Alicia Battlecock. She would have been about seventeen then, the——"

"What do you mean by 'would'?" the very young member interrupted. (He had not yet learnt the rules.)

"I mean," Cartwright explained, "she would have been about seventeen if she had not happened to be forty-five in a bad light and something over sixty in the sun. And I wish you'd let me tell my story in my own way. I've forgotten where I was now."

"You were on the point of describing Lady Alicia Battlecock as the sweetest and most innocent child God ever made," said someone who had been there before.

"Lady Alicia Battlecock?" interpolated the Bishop. "I used to know some Battlecocks when I was a young curate at King's Proctor in Somerset. One of them married a Shuttle-dore. I wonder if that would be the one?"

"Was she the sweetest and most innocent child God ever made?" Cartwright inquired.

"Oh, I dare say," said the Bishop.

"That would be her," Cartwright said.

"That would be *she*," said the Soldier. (Any soldier.)

"No, no," Cartwright insisted, "that was her all right. The sweetest and most——"

"What about the story?" asked the very young member rudely.

"I'm afraid I've rather lost the thread of it," Cartwright said apologetically. "Do you mind if I go back to the beginning?"

"Carry on," said everyone.

Cartwright signalled the boy to bring him another whisky-and-soda, re-lit his pipe and settled himself more comfortably in his armchair. (It was not his armchair really; it was one of the Club ones. Cartwright had never taken his own to the Club since one of them got stuck in the swing-doors and killed a page-boy.)

"There were six of us in it," he began. "Harbottle, Garbottle, Starbottle, Marbottle, Parbottle, Larbottle, and myself. At that time——"

"Hi," said the very young member offensively. "Wait a minute. That makes seven."

"Six," said Cartwright.

"Six," said the Bishop.

"Eight," said the Sailor. (We haven't met him before. He doesn't speak very much; if you will examine his last remark you will see why.)

"Seven," the very young member insisted. "There were Harbottle, Garbottle, Starbottle, Marbottle, Parbottle, Larbottle and myself. Seven."

"Pardon me," said Cartwright in a tone of frigid politeness, drawing himself up to his full height (about three foot six in that particular chair), "I don't recollect that you were present on that occasion, Sir."

"And I think, Sir," added the Soldier, "that you might have the grace to remain silent when affairs are being discussed which took place before you were born."

The Chartered Accountant said something under his breath about unlicked cubs, and the very young member said he was sorry. "But there *were* seven," he reiterated.

"Six," Cartwright said firmly. "I remember it as clearly as if it were yesterday. Besides myself, there were Charlie Snow, Willy Brewer——"

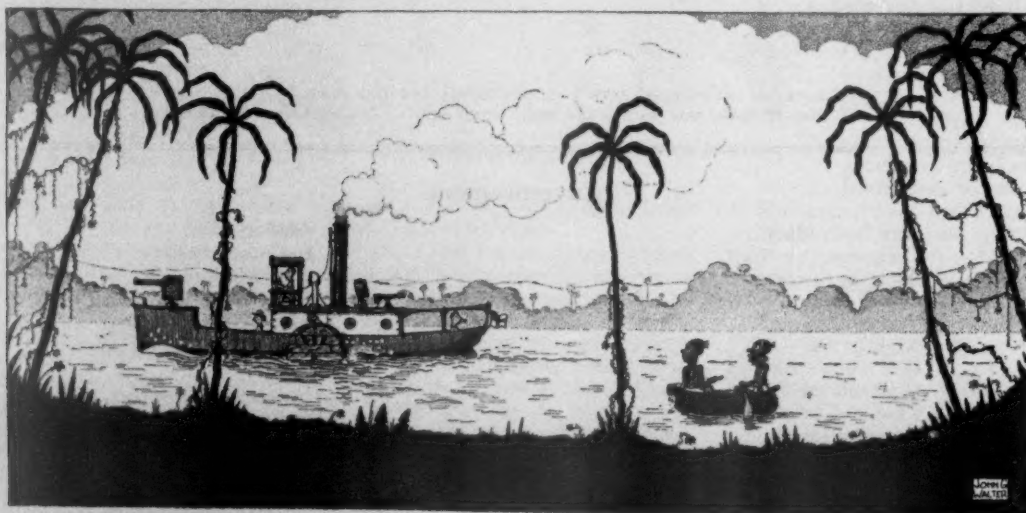
"Jan Stewer," added the Bishop reminiscently.

"Peter Gurney," suggested the Soldier.

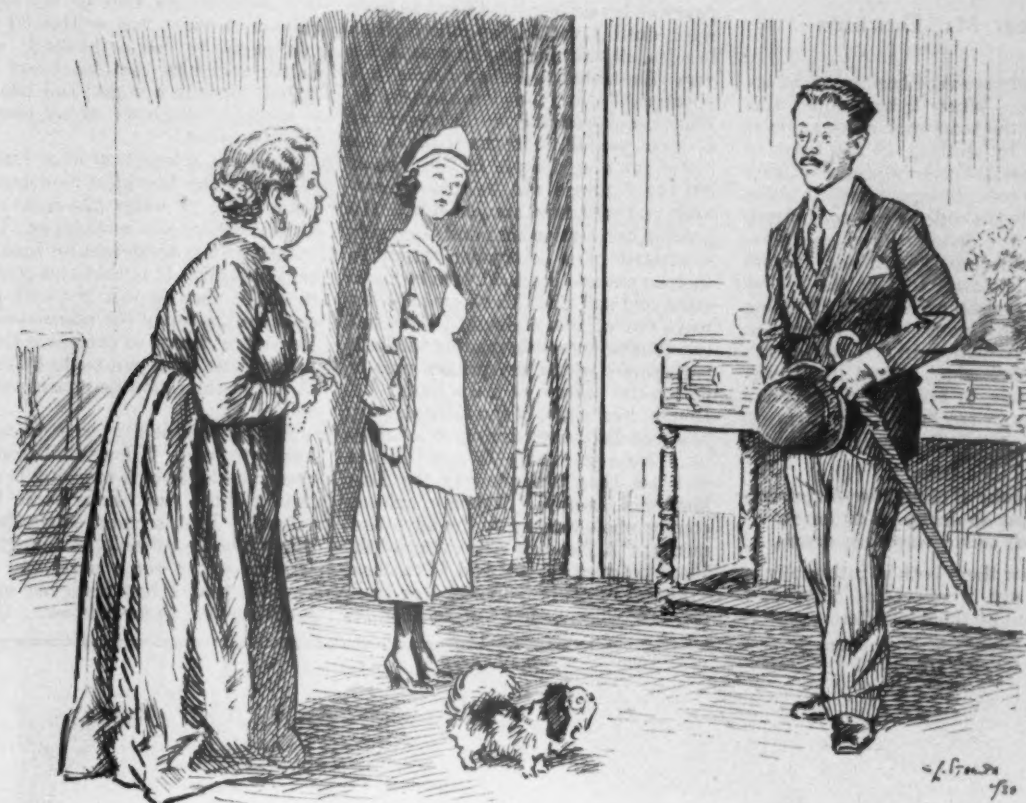
"Peter Davy," chimed in the Average Adjuster.

"Dan'l Whidden," "Arry 'Awke" came from various members strategically disposed about the room. Cartwright bowed his acknowledgments to each.

"Of course Lord Hawke was there," he said heartily. "Unless I am greatly



"THERE ARE SOME THAT SAY THE WHITE MAN HAS EVEN MIGHTIER VESSELS, BUT WHO CAN BELIEVE SUCH TALES?"



"INSTALMENT ON THE REFRIGERATOR? BUT YOU TOLD ME IT WOULD PAY FOR ITSELF."

in error, he went in third wicket down with C. B. Fry, or 'Small' Fry, as we used to call him. It was in that match that Dr. Grace covered himself with glory by hitting a full-pitcher from Fuller Pilch from one end of the *maiden* to the other for six, thus triumphantly completing his century and bringing the game to a successful conclusion. But perhaps I ought to begin at the beginning."

"As you like," said the very young member, picking up *The Illustrated London News*.

Cartwright signalled the boy to bring him another whisky-and-soda, re-lit his pipe and settled himself more comfortably in his armchair.

"It is not everyone," he began, "who has tackled a pride of hunger-mad lions single-handed and lived to tell the tale."

"Not to tell it twice, anyway," the very young member interrupted suddenly, taking appropriate action.

Who says present-day youth lacks initiative?

Balletomania

ARE you one of those that rally

At the Ballet

And extol

Popitova's toe-control

And the grace

Of her face

That enthralls

All the stalls

And the people in the pit

Who are ogling up at it

As she rapturously throws

Off a rose?

Do you love to see her hopping

And then stopping

For a rest

On the palpitating chest

Of a patriarch in tights

Who will heave her to the heights

Till she dithers and then dies,

Making eyes?

Do you do your best to show

There is nothing you don't know

About classically choreographic
mimes?

Do you murmur all the time

That Trotoffski is sublime?

Do you gasp

At his tendency to clasp

Ballerinas of renown

Upside down?

Do you volubly adore

All the score

And the clever way each bit

Seems to fit?

Not forgetting

That the setting

And degenerate design

Are divine

And the lighting

So exciting?

Do you patronise and praise

Every phase,

Yelling freely with delight

On the night,

And then tell the world it's weak

And untidy in technique

After reading all about it in
The Times?

Dear Mr. Dawkins

It was always very boring breakfasting alone. When I had done with balancing the toast-rack at an angle of forty-five by shifting all the toast to one end and had given up endeavouring to pile up enough sugar-lumps to make an island in the coffee-cup—the bottom lump always dissolved too quickly—there was nothing left to do. I could of course sit and stare at the twelve inches by eight reproduction of "Going to work—En route pour le travail, Hacia al trabajo, In via al lavoro, Zur Arbeit" which I had hung over the fireplace; or I could look for something new in my copy of a Japanese print with the little poem underneath:

*Ch'en Shih-tséng
Ziehender Wolken über Bergstrom
Nuages au dessous d'un torrent
Clouds over a mountain stream.*

But I knew them both as intimately as I knew my wrist-watch, because I had looked at them as often.

One can certainly read the morning paper at breakfast; but I liked to save mine until I got to the office. And besides, all morning papers except the very illustrated ones are quite unmanageable at the breakfast-table. They knock over the pepper and, what is worse, spill the salt; they capsize the coffee-pot and drizzle in the butter. All these things can be borne, however, and are trivial compared with the great disadvantage that one often gets interested in a newspaper article to such an extent that the bacon becomes quite cold and stiff. There are only two ways out of this difficulty. First, one can confine oneself to reading the little paragraphs which the printer uses to fill up the bottom of the column: "A Roman lead coffin of the third century has been discovered during excavations in a sand-pit near Marston Jabbet and has been presented to the East Midlands Museum." Secondly, one can confine one's reading to the advertisements: "A Pleasant Way to Spend the Time between Easter and Christmas Cruises from Ninety-five to One Hundred-and-Twenty-five Guineas," or else

the story of a man whose wife had two months ago tied to her head a balloon on which was written "I think you ought to see a doctor"; whose doctor told him that his heart beats 20,000 times in a night; and who now is the chief engineer of an electrical power-station.

I realised in time that what I wanted to relieve the breakfast boredom was some mail. A letter has none of the disadvantages of a newspaper. It has, in fact, all the desiderata for breakfast-table reading. It is neat and compact; it will balance against the milk-jug or sit upon the top of the marmalade-jar; its content is not so extensive that the bacon cools. One can begin by looking at the postmarks while pouring out the coffee.

But my difficulty was to acquire letters to read. If I wanted to receive correspondence of a morning it meant that I must first write some letters myself. That seemed altogether too much trouble. Finally, I thought of a way to secure some post, and I discovered that I had achieved my end much better than I knew. On the



"NOW TELL ME, DEAR. WHY SHOULD HITLER WANT GERMANY?"



"WELL, YOU AIN'T MUCH 'ELF TO MRS. NEWTON'S INSOMNIA, ARE YOU?"

strength of an advertisement in a weekly journal I wrote to a man who offered to tell me how to write articles and stories in my spare time. At least, I didn't write a letter, I filled in a coupon. I also wrote and asked another man how to set about getting an excellent position in the Civil Service.

After a very few days a long correspondence began. It was rather a one-sided correspondence, I must admit, because I never answered any of their letters. The school of short story and article writing wrote first to tell me that it was obvious that I had such literary talent that once I had learned from them how to express myself in compelling and communicative language and how to deal successfully with editors I should rapidly achieve remarkable eminence in the world of letters.

They sent me many letters after that. The first was to assure me once more that the literary craft was undoubtedly my *métier*, and a very lucrative one it was. In subsequent letters they pleaded with me not to delay, and very generously offered to reduce their fees

most drastically because they knew that I was a very poor man.

The Civil Service competition examination specialists were just as kind. They too wrote me many, many letters. They were sure that a man of my ability could easily attain high rank in His Majesty's Government's service. I could commence a course of training immediately. In their later letters, though, I fear they showed a little exasperation at the feckless manner in which I idled away my time while others forged ahead with their studies. I must, they said, soon come to a decision in the matter.

But all good things come to an end. I suppose it was my own fault really that my two kind correspondents finally ceased to write to me. I never responded to the warm-hearted generosity of the one nor could I bring myself to heed the exhortations of the other. I have not heard from either of them for some time now. And so I have gone back again to reading *The Times* at breakfast. Will somebody write to me, please?

Dis Aliter Visum

AFTER a frantic search midst whins and bent

At last we found, miraculously clean,
The lost ball lying; far away the green

Across the burn its invitation sent.

Luck gave me courage: fear of failure fled

As o'er the hazard soared the well-struck ball;

Adjacent to the green I saw it fall;

Close to the hole it rolled, and there lay dead.

"To-night," methought, "that cup of chaste design

Will decorate my sideboard, and my name

Shall on the club-room wall record my fame."

So it had been had but the ball been mine.



"I'M SORRY NONE OF THESE CAME OUT, MADAM. EITHER SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH THE CAMERA, OR YOU DIDN'T TAKE ANY PHOTOGRAPHS."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Last of the Skraelings

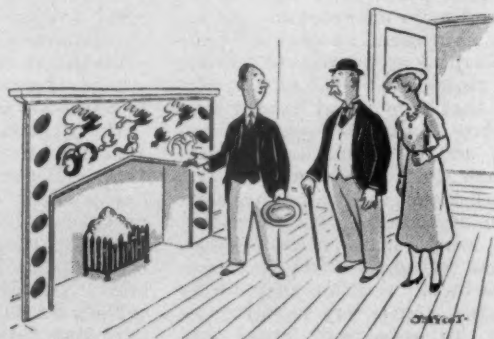
THE INDIANS of LONGFELLOW are gone long ago, yet Miss CLARE SHERIDAN drove her car from New York to their lands beyond the Rockies to find traces of the poet's ideal, models to sculpt and materials for her book, *Redskin Interlude* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON 15/-). She was lucky in her search, though her ideal Red Man must be viewed through very pink glasses, and lucky in her journey, finding the greatest courtesy and efficiency at all the many filling-stations. Yet, by contrast, she met at the Summer Colony of Artists and Tourists (run by a Company) such Totalitarian rules—no lights after 11-30 P.M. and no meals if guests were a minute late—that she fled, made friends with Indian families and stayed with them. She was even admitted to an Indian tribe and given the name *Kokotas-aki*, or Star Woman. A good part of this extremely interesting though dream-destroying book deals with the vain efforts made in Congress to legislate for the benefit of the surviving aborigines. It is well written and well illustrated with photographs, many of which show Miss SHERIDAN'S sculptures.

Iseult the Third

Greatly daring, and partly at least successful, Miss MARY ELLEN CHASE has re-told the story of the two *Iseults* and *Sir Tristram* in terms of humble and contemporary inheritors of their legendary Cornwall. *Dawn in Lyonesse* (COLLINS, 5/-) relates the three-cornered tragedy of *Ellen Pascoe*, *Susan Pengilly* and *Derek Tregonny*—all fisherfolk by birth, though the two women have seasonal employment in hotels. *Ellen* is *Derek's* betrothed, but *Susan*, unknown to *Ellen*, has aroused in *Derek* a passion to which both guiltily accede. The aim of their brief history, related with attractive fastidiousness, is to raise the modest tragedy to the lyric level of the great one—and the intention is reinforced by a "chorus" of quotations from the original legend and by allowing *Ellen*, through the good offices of a guest at her hotel, to make the literary acquaintance of her royal prototype. This is perhaps a mistake. The reincarnation motif is over emphasised, and *Ellen's* bookish obsession is an unconvincing trait in an otherwise engaging character. The racy interlude of her interview with a cross-grained manageress and the generous climax of her dealings with her rival are easily the high-watermarks of an uneven but distinguished narrative.

Music-Hall Survey

MR. M. WILLSON DISHER puts his finger shrewdly on one good reason for the decline of the music-hall when he says that nowadays nobody sings drinking-songs except when sober. For those who view the syndicated cinema and the modern palace of variety as poor substitutes for the classic boards trodden by such giants as GEORGE LEYBOURNE, ARTHUR ROBERTS, DAN LENO and MARIE LLOYD, his *Winkles and Champagne* (BATSFORD, 12/6) will be a feast. It is largely biographical, for this, more than any other branch of the theatre, was the product of its performers; but it shows how the popularity of turns given by waiters at the beginning of the eighteenth century persuaded enterprising publicans to add separate "music halls" to their premises, and how the boom in these developed until by the 1880's Londoners had their pick of as many as five hundred nightly programmes. The book is brimming with amusing photographs and reproductions of song-covers and posters. There is (how rare and excellent a blessing!) a good index. It is interesting to note (this is one of the few points in his subject which seem to have escaped



"I'D LIKE TO CALL YOUR ATTENTION TO THIS FIREPLACE."

Mr. DISHER) that as the singer of a lay entitled "Act on the Square, Boys, Act on the Square," the GREAT VANCE might reasonably be claimed as the spiritual father of our WESTERN Brothers.

Churches in France

As far back as the days of DICKY DOYLE—who depicted *Brown, Jones and Robinson* gaping at the groining of a cathedral among a crowd of devout worshippers—our countrymen have paid at least a perfunctory tribute to the beauties of Continental church architecture. The highly technical volumes produced over here to arouse a more intelligent interest have naturally left us cold; but Mr. ARTHUR GARDNER's enchanting new book on French Church Architecture should kindle the most apathetic. Gone are complicated categories and lists of lifeless definitions. From the rise of Romanesque to the passing of Flamboyant (through Gothic and into Renaissance, at which point we stop) the letterpress deals with practical problems as they confronted the master-mason; and from the pointed arch ousting the round to the posing of a coquettish pinnacle on the pier of a flying buttress, everything is seen as the triumphant answer to a professional poser. Two-thirds of this adventurous book is given to the author's photographs (many of them pre-war) with explanatory notes; and these should render *An Introduction to French Church Architecture* (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 18/-) as precious to connoisseurs as the whole is invaluable to the beginner.

The Fight to Live

There are few more expert at gilding the scientific pill than Mr. RAYMOND L. DITMARS, Curator of Mammals and Reptiles at the New York Zoological Park, and in *The Fight to Live* (LOVAT DICKSON, 8/6), he is, as usual, both instructive and entertaining. In a world that seems to be diverting its energies into either waging war or contemplating war, the title is well chosen, but at the same time the timid reader need not anticipate a mere blood bath. The numerous fine photographs are far from bellicose and the book itself devotes quite as much space to camouflage and the evasion of conflict as to hostilities in the keenly competitive world of Nature. The author's lifelong dealings with deadly serpents provide many interesting stories. Poisonous snakes must not be supposed to have things all their own way. Their natural enemies are numerous, and are now happily largely enjoying Government protection. The unloved odoriferous skunk, for instance, is a champion snake slayer. A skunk placed in a pen with a deadly Fer-de-lance at the famous snake farm at Sao Paulo,



Page. "FANCY BALL, SIR? NO, SIR! MISSUS'S FANCY BALL, SIR, WERE LAST TOOSDAY, SIR."

John Leech, August 9th, 1851.

Brazil, nonchalantly walked up to the reptile and allowed itself to be bitten on the face whilst it calmly broke the snake's back in several places. Without enjoying the skunk's immunity, man has so perfected anti-snake-bite serum that Brazil's former annual death-rate of several thousand has now been reduced to a mere hundred. There are fascinating chapters on animals' weapons from tusks and claws to poison darts and smoke screens, and an entertaining survey of the disciplined warfare as produced by the lower animals. In fact they seem to have little to learn from us in this regard unless it be that all-important arm of warfare—the systematic lying and the slandering of the enemy—termed "propaganda."

Tracking a Saint

It is worth while to follow OLIVER GOGARTY, whether he walks down Sackville Street or, as in *I Follow St. Patrick* (RICH AND COWAN, 16/-), he walks in the legendary footsteps of the mild little Roman-British country gentleman who was destined to convert to the more picturesque manifestations of Christianity the snake-worshipping Firbolgh. ST. PATRICK, like HOMER, had many legendary birthplaces. Dr. GOGARTY, whose epexegetic enthusiasm has taken his legs afield as well as his mind, plumps for Roman Britain's farthest West, between Cardigan Bay and Whitesands Bay. Thence with a sufficient foundation of legend and a noble superstructure of shrewd surmise we follow the Saint to his hovel of bondage on Slemish, and thence to the far island of Lerins, whereafter for twenty-three years the holy man is lost to us, to Dr. GOGARTY and to legend itself. But legend comes crowding back when the Saint, now a bishop, returns to do battle with the Druids for the soul of Ireland. And of his subsequent exploits you can believe as much or as little as you like—little, perhaps, because of the great mass of largely unbelievable legend that has been rushed in where the *Epistles* and the *Book of Armagh* fail to tread—but Dr. GOGARTY's romantic scholarship does more to bring ST. PATRICK to life than all the fables and fancies with which the pious faithful have enveloped him.

Counsels of Trent

AN old friend whom we do not meet too often makes a welcome reappearance. Just as a famous predecessor found his ruling passion stronger than death, *Trent Intervenes* (NELSON, 7/6) in a dozen post-ultimate cases. It is clear that Mr. E. C. BENTLEY, while refusing to overwork him, is as fond of the inquisitive painter as he has insisted that we should be. The problems which he has here set him to solve are as various in character as they are to the ordinary intelligence baffling. Nothing, however, can baffle Philip Trent for long, his subtlety in discovering clues is always carried just a little further than the criminal's ingenuity in concealing them. Among these mixed adventures of his there is little to choose in point of interest. Perhaps the one in which a brassie plays an unorthodox part might be a personal favourite, while the last in printed order (called "The Ordinary Hairpins"), in which no crime is involved, unless a false suggestion of *felo de se* be accounted a crime, has a quality of its own, an unexpected touch of sentiment and even of poetry. Nevertheless one cannot but feel that both Mr. BENTLEY and

Mr. Trent need a larger field for the display of their great abilities. These brief chronicles of detection are not only diminutive but somehow rather dim. They lack the cardinal virtue of their kind. It is quite possible to put them down before the last page has been reached.

The Game

When Mr. H. S. ALTHAM's *A History of Cricket* (ALLEN AND UNWIN) appeared some twelve years ago it was warmly welcomed, and now, with the addition of six new chapters by Mr. E. W. SWANTON and "substantial compression" of some of the old ones, it has been reissued at the moderate price of 8/6. Some of us may look charily at the encomiums to be found in Introductions, but when Sir PELHAM WARNER states that this is "the greatest book ever written on cricket" he has real justification for the claim. Turning to the new chapters, it may be that in "The Counties: 1919-1937," adherents of Sussex and Somerset may feel aggrieved at the scant attention paid to these most sporting teams. Apart, however, from this rigorous economy of space Mr. SWANTON has fitted most aptly into Mr. ALTHAM's scheme of things, and his contributions are up to date and written with prudence and authority. Once again the illustrations are by no means the least interesting part of a delightful book.



"YES, BUT I WAS MARRIED LAST WEEK."

Family Feuds

On page 112 of *The Theme is Murder* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) Mr. GAVIN HOLT's professional investigator, Joel Saber, remarks to his assistant, "We're dealing with fan-tasts—emotional, frustrated fan-tasts," and it is true that the more closely one becomes acquainted with the Darrens and their friends the more certain is it that the majority of them are exceedingly queer people. Mr. HOLT is successful in surrounding this stricken family with an atmosphere of suspense and doom, and his study both of the Darrens and of their friends at a time of stress is all the more impressive because in the main it is restrained. This clever tale would have been even pleasanter to read if Mr. HOLT had not allowed a rather facetious young man to tell it.

Epitaph

He strove with none; he said he hated strife.
His loves were books, wildfowling on the Border,
Roses, his food, his Burgundy, his wife
And CHOPIN's Preludes; roughly in that order.

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Charivaria

"It is possible to tell a man's political opinions by the newspaper he reads," says a magistrate. So the man who sits opposite us in the train evidently always thinks as we do.

★ ★ ★

The Second Time of Asking

"During the service the banns of marriage of Mr. A. B— and Miss D. L— were published. It is over 250 years ago that this was last done."—*Somerset Paper*.

★ ★ ★

In connection with IL DUCE's recent birthday we understand that a congratulatory message to the Italian nation was received from Signor MUSSOLINI.

★ ★ ★

We read that the majority of American gangsters do not allow their wives to carry firearms. There is nothing worse, of course, than living with a woman who *will* have the last shot.



★ ★ ★

A news-magazine states that Americans do not pay their tradesmen's bills so promptly as in time past. They are not the early settlers their ancestors used to be.

★ ★ ★

A political writer gives it as his opinion that this country could do with at least twenty new laws.

Presumably his idea is to make a generous allowance for breakages.

★ ★ ★

"Hands Off England's Cliffs!" demands a letter to a newspaper. Unless of course you are hanging over the edge.

★ ★ ★

"Brooklands Flying Club secretary said: 'We have 400 flying members, all keen on joining the Air Guard. I have just been through a pile of letters from applicants a foot high.'"—*Daily Paper*.

Talk about waste of time!

★ ★ ★

The Channel Swimming season has begun. We understand that this year there is tremendous competition to be the first swimmer to cross by mistake.



consulting the stars. it's getting warmer.

"Your teashop waitresses are very attractive," declares a visitor from France. Although we know one or two who couldn't be truthfully described as fetching.

★ ★ ★

Snip

"HITLER TO SELL CROWN JEWELS EVERY WEDNESDAY 2D."

"Cavalcade" Poster.

★ ★ ★

An astrologer claims that he can make accurate weather forecasts by Mercury in the ascendant means that

★ ★ ★

The Arabians, according to an historian, were the first to discover the secret of distilling alcohol. Which seems to explain one or two of those *Nights*.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent who signs himself "Father of Four Sons" writes to ask what becomes of new razor-blades.

★ ★ ★

An American visitor says that next-door to a picturesque old village inn with low oaken beams he was interested to find a modern pharmacy. Stocking sticking-plaster, no doubt.

★ ★ ★

One of our famous novelists declares that he has never seen any of the film versions of his books. How on earth does he know?

★ ★ ★

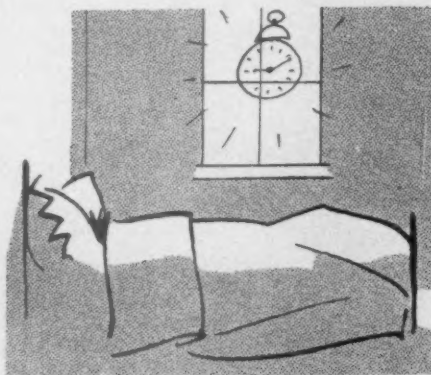
"If you are a woman, remember that no editor is out for a flirtation.—*Miss Ureula Bloom*."

"Saying of the Week" in "The Observer."

We are never told what the Editor is out for when we call.

★ ★ ★

"What is the minimum time necessary for the human body to sleep?" asks a doctor. Half-an-hour longer.



The Poet Under Orders

THE Editor said, "Come, write a song—a song of the rolling sea
And the holiday crowd, the jolly day crowd," the Editor said to me.
"Go down, my boy, to the Big Resorts, go down to the People's Pops;
And for goodness' sake," he hissed, "forget you're one of the Shropshire Shropps."

Well, that was the sort of tone the Editor adopted.
He's the cheery-obese type, nothing if not convivial.
I dislike being dictated to—or shall one say co-opted?—
As for his metre, there's only one word for it—trivial.

But that is what the Editor said, so I've joined the Hearty and Hot;
Here I am in the holiday jam, as tanned as a Hottentot,
Where men are men and shorts are shorts and shrimps undoubtedly shrimps,
And over the head of an ice-cream man I've had a bird's-eye glimpse

Of the sea, the sea, the wild wet sea!
Roll on, ye waves, roll on!
And take that fat white woman away
With her suit so scant and her scream so gay,
For the tender grace of a day that is gone
Will never come back (as TENNYSON remarked)
To a person of her calibre.

I wrote a song of Brighton,
I wrote a song of Hove,
I wrote a song of Blackpool
And left them in a cove.
At low tide, to retrieve them,
I wandered back one day;
The sea'd been there before me—
The sea is funny that way.

Oh, the dinginess of Dungeness, the sponginess of sponge,
'Tis nothing to the plunginess of those who take the plunge.
With bated breath old fishermen they talk about it still:
How Beachy lost her Head and fell for pop-eye Portland Bill.



"IS IT COLD THIS MORNING, BOYS?"

At Weston-super-Bare,
At Southend-far-from-Sea
The gulls croon on the air
"Thanks for the memor-ee."

(I hope I'm calling the bluff
On this heave-ho! seaside stuff?)

The swimming-pool here cost sixty thousand sparks,
The ocean cost nothing (space for appropriate remarks);
The band is billed to play twice daily on the North-South Pier;

So far "Pom-pom" is all that I've been near enough to hear.

Nevertheless it's nice to undress and sprawl in the sun (if any),
Exhibit your form till it's tough and warm and brown as a bright nude penny,
Return to your desk all picturesque, wearing your seaside smirk,
Glad to get back to the dear home-shack, back to beautiful work.

(Sing a song of Hastings, a pocketful of Rye;
If this don't please the Editor I'll eat my old school tie.)

Parachutist Lands in Hop-Garden

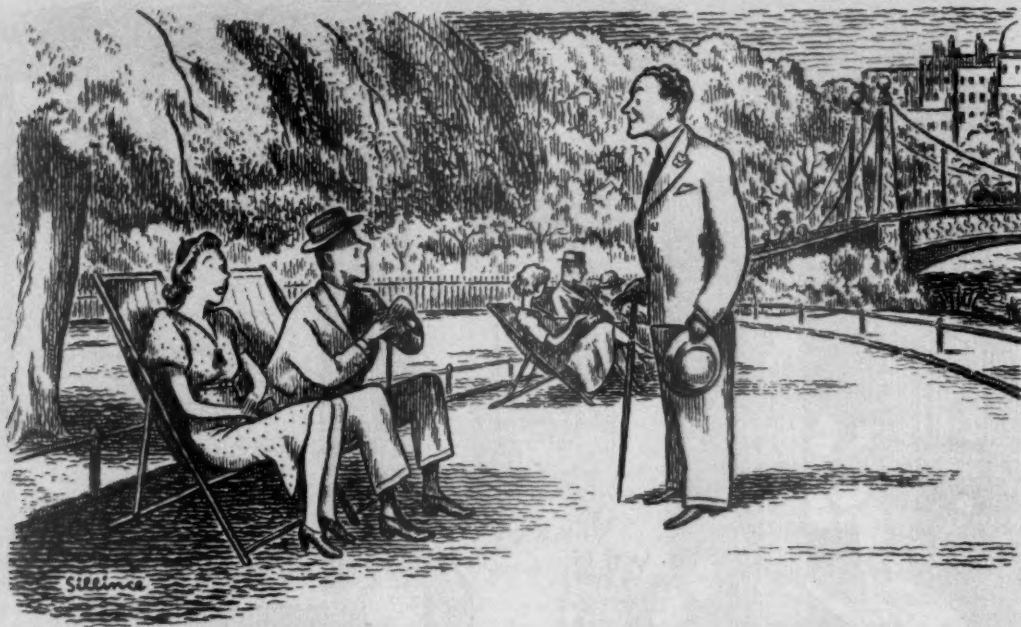
THE trouble with whitebait fritters, I mean the trouble with evening papers is that they tend to confuse the mind with information which, though interesting enough in its way, is not of more than transitory importance. I generally read one of them at lunch and another in the train home and I fry the third in butter until browned, that is to say I find the third awaiting me on the hall-table when I get back. The result is that by dinner-time I am what publishers call a mine of curious and recondite information on every subject under the sun. This is pleasant in its way, and a definite boon to my fellow-diners, who get the benefit of it, but it worries me rather because I am one of those who believe that there is a limit to the amount of knowledge the brain can accommodate. You can have a three-quarter-length coat with reversible sleeves for the beach or you can fill it up with every kind and manner of rubbish you happen to hear or read about. "Depend upon it," says *Sherlock Holmes*, who thinks with me in this matter, "there comes a time when for every addition of knowledge you forget something you knew before. It is of the highest importance, therefore, not to leave your puppy behind"—I beg his pardon—"not to have useless facts elbowing out the useful ones." These are words which we should all do well to take to heart. I for one believe in their truth implicitly. I know for a fact that when I read in the train this evening that Pigeon N.U.R.P. 38 was at 5, Killowen Avenue, Northolt Park, the date of the Battle of Shooters Hill went clean out of my mind. So narrow is the line that divides Fagg from the record number of runs scored between July 10th and August 15th in any one season.

If my only concern were the steady drain on my knowledge of History and English Literature that goes on every time I open an evening paper, that in all conscience would be bad enough. But I have a graver worry. I sometimes think that Daisy is the mildest water-buffalo the Zoo has ever known. The Cape water-buffalo is a big grey-coloured beast with rather stumpy legs and curious wide-sweeping horns that meet broadly over the top of the head to give exactly the impression of a man wearing smarmed-down hair parted in the middle. However, I have an even graver



JUST A CHANCE

Will you make that chance a certainty for one at least of these children? A guinea sent to the Children's Country Holidays Fund, 17, Buckingham Street, W.C.2, means that one more child from London's grim slums will have a fortnight of real happiness by the sea or in the country—one less will suffer the bitter disappointment of being left behind.



"TOPPING RIDGE OF HIGH PRESSURE—WHAT!"

worry than this. What really upsets me is the gradually increasing conviction that my thoughts do not always come out exactly in the right order. There are so many facts in my head that occasionally one will obtrude itself (such is my belief) at an unwanted moment. For instance, I have had the greatest difficulty lately in keeping whitebait fritters out of my conversation, and even out of my written work. You drain and fry the fish, as a matter of fact, and place them on beds of finely-shredded lettuce—after you've dusted them with flour, that is, or is it before? Then you cover them with mayonnaise and serve with slips of cucumber and tomato. *Mr. Dick* had much the same trouble of course, but with him it was *always* whitebait fritters, in a manner of speaking, so he knew where he was, but with me a Woman at Willesden is almost as likely to come in as not. "I tried to stop the bleeding as soon as I saw it wasn't my husband."

Bang goes the date of Matilda's Flight from Oxford, if I ever knew it.

This complexity and confusion in my brain is particularly annoying just now because I wanted to discuss a statement in *The Evening News* that if it could be possible to label each molecule in a half-pint of water and throw it into a river or reservoir and a million years later to take up a similar amount of water at a given point, with salt and pepper to taste, then more than one thousand of the original molecules would be found in the glass. It seems incredible, doesn't it? But according to official estimates nearly four thousand cars an hour passed over Staines Bridge during the Bank Holiday week-end, so think how much water must flow *under* it in a million years. Now supposing you took up your half-pint from the Birmingham Water Works in the Elan Valley, labelled the molecules and emptied the water back again into the stripling Thames at Bablock Hythe, it is easy to see that a very wide dispersion of the

fluid would have taken place long before the end of the stated period. You could go up in an aeroplane, on your ninetieth birthday as did Mrs. Emma Rowlandson, of 19, The Esplanade, Clacton, and see neither hide nor hair of it.

These smiling faces, by the way, belong to Anna Lee and her baby daughter, Joanna Venetia.

There is a great deal of loose thinking about molecules. When Canon W. M. Peacock, Headmaster of King Alfred's School, Wantage, Berks, said the other day (as he is reported by *The Daily Telegraph* to have said), "I believe that if we all danced in beer-gardens, fear, distrust and cowardice would disappear between nation and nation," it is not easy to see just what he had in mind. Nobody doubts that universal pirouetting in beer-gardens would go a long way towards solving the problems of Europe. It is indeed a step for which this paper has been agitating ever since the Repeal of the Corn Laws. But the precise connection of this reform with molecules is not easy to determine. Does the Canon intend to suggest that the experiment could be carried out equally successfully with beer? If so it is not a little disquieting to find the Church coming out so openly on the side of the whitebait and the water-buffalo.

The young men and women of this country are as ready as ever they were to leap to the service of their native land, but we shall never get them wholeheartedly dancing in beer-gardens by suggesting that they should pour their half-pints into rivers and reservoirs. The labourer, we shall never tire of saying, is worthy of his hire. Educate our boys and girls by all means in the significance of the dance, cut them on the cross, lay them, if you will, on shredded lettuce, but do not attempt to coerce them with the spectre of molecular action in the dim and distant future. A million years is a long time, even in the life of a water-buffalo.

I shall hope to return to this subject at a later date.

H. F. E.

On This Spot

"HAVE you ever noticed that the places where great celebrities once lived are all exactly alike?" Laura said earnestly.

I simply replied No.

"Well, they are. Just villas, left exactly as they were in the celebrity's lifetime. I daresay this very house will become something of the kind after your death."

I made a deprecatory sound which Laura evidently took at its face-value because she added, "I mean, if you ever become a great celebrity. There'd be a little pair of worn slippers in a glass case. I think perhaps we ought to borrow those. Do you know anybody who takes size three-and-a-half, or less?"

I said that I didn't. And there wasn't a single glass case in the house, anywhere.

"They're put in later."

"Then the house isn't exactly as it was in the celebrity's lifetime."

"There would have to be alterations anyway, here. I mean, you wouldn't want your writing-desk left exactly as it is, would you?"

I admitted that I wouldn't.

"Nor the boot-cupboard, for that matter. Or the kitchen, as this particular cook leaves it, either."

"Well," said Laura with her customary zeal, "we could start getting it

ready a bit, couldn't we? After all, as I said at the beginning, all these places are very much alike, really. You'd have to have a few faded old gowns hanging up in a wardrobe."

"Nothing," I said rather bitterly, "could be easier than that."

"And a frightful-looking stuffed chair, with a rope tied across it so that nobody should sit in it."

I said that my idea of a chair was that people *should* sit in it. One had always supposed it was for that purpose that chairs were made.

"Not in celebrated villas. There's always a chair of that kind, and a rope and a little notice to say it was the celebrity's favourite chair, in which his masterpieces were composed, or in which he sat and talked in the long winter evenings while his friends gathered round listening reverently."

Some of my own long winter evenings passed before my mind's eye as Laura spoke, and the way in which they didn't correspond to her words was quite extraordinary. I think that she saw it herself, because she added almost at once that we ought to try next winter to get old Lady Flagge, and General and Mrs. Battlegate, and the Rector and his wife, and Miss Plum and Miss Dodge to make up a little party.

"And we'd better decide at once which chair you're going to sit in."

"It would be more to the point to decide which chairs they're going to sit in, because some will certainly have to be brought in from the study. We should never have enough to go round, even with two of them on the sofa."

"I think you'd better have the little blue armchair that Aunt Emma practised on after we'd had the upholstery demonstration at the Women's Institute," Laura told me.

I said that if there *was* one chair in the house across which I would willingly tie a rope so that nobody should sit in it, it was the little blue armchair after Aunt Emma had finished with it. Laura, however, was paying very little attention to anything I said.

"One or two old toys would be terribly good."

"The children have plenty."

"Too modern. They'd have to be things you'd played with at the age of three. Wasn't there something in one of Miss Edgeworth's stories called a trap-and-ball?"

I thought that Laura had rather mistaken the period under discussion, and told her so.

She then inquired if I had any old love-letters, painted fans, account-books, and battered tin candle-sticks,



"JUST LOOK AT THOSE MAGNIFICENT MARIGOLDS, WINIFRED—OR ARE THEY JUST HORRID BITS OF ORANGE-PEEL?"

all of which she said would look well behind glass cases round the walls.

"And there'll be photographs, naturally, of all of us."

"Why?"

"There always are photographs of other people. I don't quite know why. Either they influenced the celebrity's early period or they devoted themselves to his later years. I suppose I shall have to be the person devoted to your later years."

"If you're not being taken about in a bath-chair yourself by then. Besides, I'm not sure that I want you to devote yourself to my later years just for the sake of having your photograph in a glass case on the wall."

"There'll be others as well. Charles, for instance. It's a great pity you're so respectably married."

"I've sometimes thought so myself."

"It would be a great deal better if there was some tremendous scandal in the background," Laura said wistfully. "Supposing that Charles had been married to your greatest friend, and you'd felt it was absolutely necessary for your work that you should have him, and you and he had just gone off, and left her with hundreds of little children. . . ."

"They could have helped out with the photographs in the glass cases," I admitted.

"And there might be letters from the wife too, saying that she quite understood, and everybody would say how wonderful that was."

"It would be equally interesting, and almost more natural, if there were letters from her saying that she didn't quite understand," I suggested; but Laura begged me not to be cynical.

And at that point Charles came in and asked what we were talking about. But it proved impossible to explain.

E. M. D.



"I'M AFRAID YOU'LL HAVE TO SPEAK A LITTLE LOUDER—YOU SEE WE KEEP THE TELEPHONE ON THE SAME TABLE AS THE WIRELESS."

Oscar, Frank and Me

Now that Frank Harris's biography of Oscar Wilde has been published in this country and the *ridiculus mus* is at last fairly out of the bag, I do not see that there is any further reason why I should keep silence about my own contacts with the great playwright, especially as so many of the accounts given by other people are—need I say?—tissues of lies.

Oscar—all his friends called him Oscar, after his death if not before—was at the time of our first meeting engaged upon preliminary work for *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. This work consisted chiefly of collecting the old shirt-cuffs of friends with whom he had dined during the past several years and making literal transcripts of their contents. One of the best of Lord Henry Wotton's epigrams—"Nowadays people know the price of everything and the value of nothing"—came off the dickey I was wearing for Aubrey Beardsley's twenty-first birthday party. Harris maintains that it first appeared on the sleeve of his white ducks when he went duck-shooting with Oscar at Oxford, but I am compelled to conclude that he is here using his imagination to help out his memory.

Harris states in his book that he immediately recognised the great merits of *Dorian Gray*, but I think he misleads himself. Actually it was I

who recognised the great merits of *Dorian Gray*. Until it was firmly entrenched in the good opinion of the public Harris confined his comment to two points: first, that the "olive-coloured face" attributed to Lord Henry Wotton was far too green for nature and would probably have a disastrous effect on the paintings of the young Frenchman Picasso, then a mere youth; and, second, that Lord Henry's feat in Chapter IV. of "raising his dark crescent-shaped eyebrows and looking at both of them with an amused smile" was a physical impossibility.

Another lapse is made by Harris in his description of the verbal fencing-match between Oscar and Whistler; and indeed by Shaw, Sherard, Lord Alfred Douglas and anybody else who has ever described it. My own recollection of the episode—and I will back it fairly confidently—is as follows: Oscar made a casual remark to the effect that a cynic was a man who knew the price of everything and the value of nothing, and Whistler, who was listening, immediately remarked, "I wish I had said that."

"You will, Oscar, you will," Wilde murmured languidly.

This version, as will readily be seen, differs fundamentally from any other yet given. I think it more piquant than most.

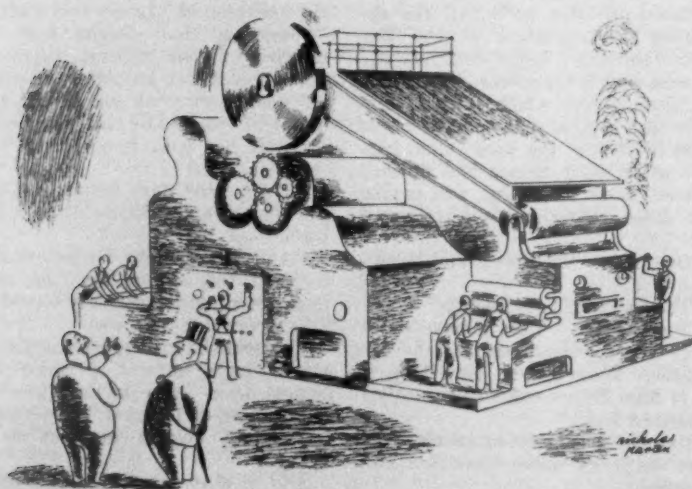
Harris's story of his first reactions to Oscar's first play, *Lady Windermere's Fan*, is palpably absurd. According to him, he greeted the announcement of the play with the enthusiastic comment

that the title was an excellent one. Now as a matter of fact it was I who said that the title was an excellent one. Harris confined his criticism to some trumpery comparisons with Shakespeare, Congreve and other outmoded dramatists—and that, moreover, on an occasion when Oscar was not present. Later he came out into the open and admitted that the play contained some delightfully witty lines. He singled out for particular admiration, I need hardly say, that pointed sally, "A cynic is a man who," etc. Probably at that time Harris did not read his shirt-cuffs as attentively as I did.

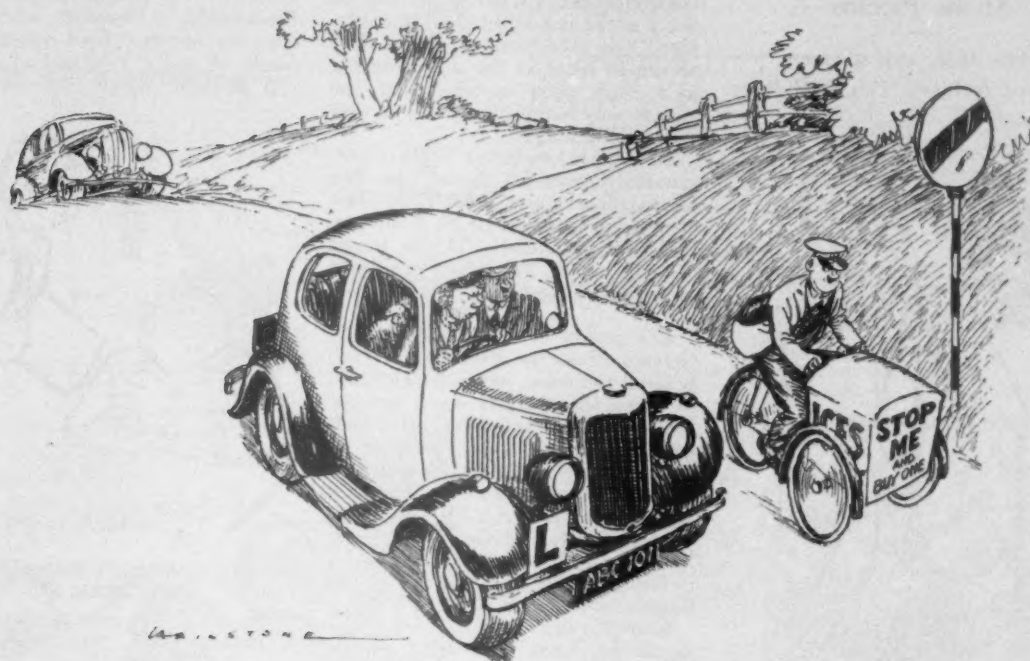
One especially cruel slander which is perpetuated in the Harris biography concerns the flowers that Oscar used to wear in his button-hole. According to Harris he used to affect "green cornflowers and gilded lilies." Now this is the purest clotted nonsense; of course Oscar was far too good a Shakespearean ever to commit such a *bêtise*. He used, certainly, to wear a signet-ring of painted ungilded gold when he was at Oxford; but his buttonhole, when it was not graced by a green carnation—not a cornflower, as Harris ill-naturedly suggests—was generally occupied by a *painted* lily. He used to have them painted for him by all the great painters of the day.

Harris's account of his behaviour immediately prior to the trial, with his refusal to come into court and talk about *Dorian Gray*, and later on the fantastic story of the steam-yacht at Erith, indicate quite evidently that it was he and not Oscar (or even me) who lost his head. Actually, if my offer of assistance had been accepted, the trial would never have taken place, or, if it had, would have resulted in a triumphant acquittal. Not only had I made full arrangements to bribe the judge and jury, but I was in touch with two young American engineers named Wilbur and Orville Wright, who were prepared to get Wilde out of the country by a means which, if we had been able to achieve it, would have staggered the world and turned Oscar overnight from a calumniated villain into a deathless hero. But I was unable to get support from Oscar's other friends, who (as usual) had lost their heads completely. First of all no one would put up the money for the bribery; and then a campaign of whispering was launched which resulted in Oscar's developing a horror of airsickness and a fatal obsession for driving about in hansoms with Frank Harris and the rest of the gang of muddle-headed sycophants.

Over Oscar's last days in Paris it



"THIS IS THE MACHINE THAT DOES THE WORK OF SIX MEN."



"SURELY THAT'S WRONG—HE OVERTOOK ME ON THE INSIDE!"

were better to draw a veil. Suffice it to say that only I was unselfish enough to help him in those last days. Harris and the other biographers, in their eagerness to outdo each other in the number of cheques they gave him, have apparently agreed on a conspiracy of silence in this connection. But if I was never able to lend Oscar fifty pounds I could at least render him more lasting service. Many were the suggestions for plays and poems which I gave him, quite unsolicited; and though Oscar never mustered enough energy to use any of them, he always acknowledged them with the grateful formula, "Thank you, my dear Bertie, a thousand times; I really must do something about it one day."

Up to the very end Oscar maintained his capacity for epigram. I remember in the very last days an occasion when Robert Ross and I had gone to visit him; Wilde was as tight as a lord, and Robbie and I were discussing with the landlord the problem of how to get his boots off. The landlord suggested that perhaps the *milord Anglais* would be warmer with his boots on.

"*Je crains,*" Robert Ross told him severely, "*que vous n'êtes un peu cynique.*"

"*Comment?*" cried the sensitive

Dupoirier. "*Qu'est-ce que vous voulez dire, un cynique, hein?*"

Ross was about to answer in conciliatory mood when Oscar, who had overheard the last sentence, interrupted.

"*Un cynique, mon cher M. Dupoirier,*" he pronounced gravely, "*c'est un homme qui connaît le prix de toutes choses et la valeur de rien.*"

None of Wilde's other biographers mentions this occasion. The fact of the matter is that my recollections of Wilde differ so fundamentally from all the others in most points that it is obvious that one side or the other has, to put it plainly, fabricated a tissue of lies.

It doesn't particularly matter which.

"Now that You Live in the Country . . ."

Now that you live in the country,
you will slowly change your ways.
Unwittingly you will turn your back
on your fuggy London days.

Little by little the urge will grow
to open each window wide,
and the cold, cold air of the country
will come surging about inside.

As melts the snow in the sunshine
the blood in your veins will thaw,
and you'll go round turning the heating off
and opening every door.

The nearer you get to Nature
the more, it appears, you perspire;
you will throw off your furs during dinner
and let out the drawing-room fire.

You'll believe you're the selfsame person—
but no, as the years unfold
you'll get hotter and hotter and hotter
and your visitors colder than cold.

We shall find, with the stealth of a tortoise,
unheeded, unheard as a mouse,
though you think you've a house in the country,
the country's crept into your house!
V. G.

"Arrangements for the dance are in the hands of Miss Kathleen —, who has chosen a frock of shocking pink taffeta, woven with a tinsel thread, and Mr. J. A. —."—*Melbourne Paper.*

You can't shock him.

At the Pictures

CIRCA 1880, AND EARLIER
In *Gold Is Where You Find It*, or



J.H.D.

NO-YOU-CAN'T-HAVE-MY-
DAUGHTER. I.

Colonel Ferris . . . CLAUDE RAINS
Jared Whitney . . . GEORGE BRENT

Gold is where you find it (the capitals are where you put them), the time is about 1877; the place, the Sacramento Valley in California; the quarrel, between the farmers in the valley and the miners above, who by means of high-pressure streams of water from "hydraulic monitors" are washing the hillside away in their search for gold and smothering the wheatfields below with gallons of liquid mud.

In its way it is a great theme, and the film, which is in Technicolor, treats it well. Some of the colour in these scenes is extraordinarily fine, and so is some of the acting: CLAUDE RAINS, for example, is admirable as the active, dignified, conscientious leader of the farmers. OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND is very good as his daughter, and GEORGE BRENT makes as much as he can of the part of the dashing hero, Jared Whitney. He, the new superintendent of the Golden Moon mine which is causing all the trouble, is fired when he refuses to condone and take an active part in murder. The miners, in a commanding position, are beginning to pick off with rifle fire, one by one, the angry farmers as they advance up the hill; but before the killing can go far Jared has dynamited the dam and

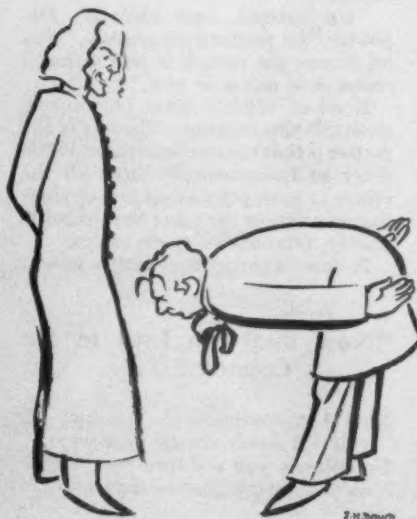
given the film an impressively spectacular climax. I fail to see how so many of the important characters survived this cataclysm, but there they all are in court at the end, listening to a very good speech about the reasons why farming is more important than gold-mining.

Then, after nearly two hours of fine, genuinely beautiful scenes, the film has to end on a sort of Art Plate—two lovers silhouetted beside No. 6 Salmon-Red Artificial Sunset. This is, to put it mildly, a pity. I advise you to leave at the end of the court scene.

The period of *Liszt Rhapsody* (in German, *Wenn die Musik Nicht Wäre*) is about the same, but that only helps to make the contrast more striking. We move from colour to black-and-white, from elemental passions to polite comedy, out of the open air into—into the nursery almost. For *Liszt Rhapsody* is more of a "U" film than *Snow White*. It is all about exceedingly Nice People. If we wish to be offensive to the villain we might go so far as to call him a coxcomb.

LUIS RAINER—wait a minute, wait a minute—LUIS RAINER, I repeat, appears as the seventy-years-old *Liszt*. (You see that there shouldn't be an E at the end of that first name, after all.) All he has to do is to wander about drawing-rooms looking fatherly (and sit about drawing-rooms looking as if he is playing the piano).

Florian Mayr, a poor music-teacher, loves *Thekla*, daughter of the *Consul*,



J.H.D.

A LIST TO LISZT

Franz Liszt LUIS RAINER
Florian Mayr PAUL HÖRIGER

and she loves him; but her silly mother wishes her to marry *Kuzmilsch von Prechitschkin*, a Coxcomb, who is only after her money. *Liszt* smoothes the course of young love and all is well.

A pleasant, simple little film (very



J.H.D.

NO-YOU-CAN'T-HAVE-MY-
DAUGHTER. II.

The Consul . . . WILLI SCHÄFFERS
Florian Mayr . . . PAUL HÖRIGER

jerkily cut in places), embroidered with some good piano-playing of various LISZT compositions.

I suppose the profusion of accents in *Kidnapped* is expected to pass unnoticed in America, but surely it will trouble audiences here. It makes the STEVENSON story even more of a charade than costume films usually manage to be. When Americans hear a soldier outside the *Duke of Argyll's* castle saying, "And 'oo moight it be, cawlin' on 'is Grice?" they take it presumably as redolent of somewhere in the outlandish British Isles, a few hundred miles or so making no odds; just as most British audiences (let's be fair) fail to notice any difference between a California and a New York accent. FREDDIE BARTHOLOMEW is *David Balfour*, and he makes no attempt to be Scottish at all; WARNER BAXTER as *Alan Breck* tries, intermittently, but gets closer to being Irish. There are compensations: MILES MANDER is excellent as *Ebenezer Balfour*, and REGINALD OWEN very good as the villainous captain of the brig; but the film remains a charade, "pictorially enriched throughout" though it is "with the *Glowing New Sepiatone*." I should perhaps mention that some people in front of me thought it was lovely. R. M.

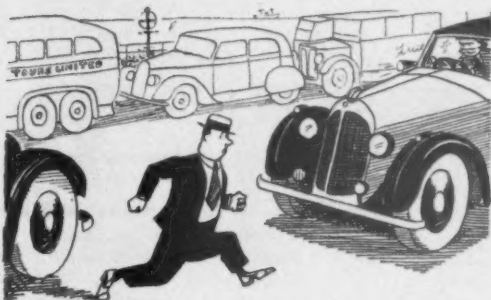
AN OLD SONG RESUNG



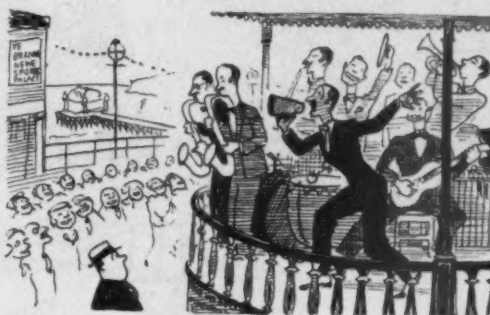
"OH, I DO LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEASIDE—



I DO LIKE TO BE BESIDE THE SEA—



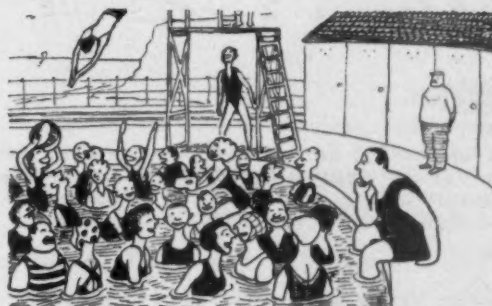
I DO LIKE TO STROLL ALONG THE PROM, FROM, FROM, FROM—



WHILE THE BRASS BAND PLAYS TIDDLEY-OM-POM-POM—



SO JUST PUT ME DOWN BESIDE THE SEASIDE—



AND I'LL BE BESIDE MYSELF WITH GLEE—



THERE ARE LOTS OF GIRLS BESIDE I WOULD
LIKE TO BE BESIDE—



BESIDE THE SEASIDE, BESIDE THE SEA."

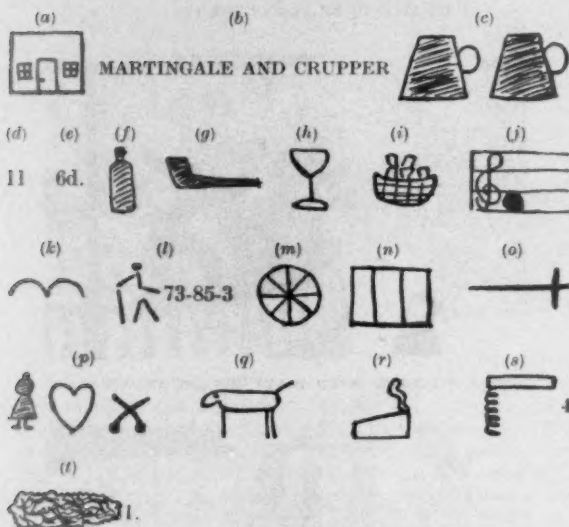
Pubs

THE gay little symbols employed in that entrancing book, the Michelin Guide to France, are so much more expressive of the inner merits of hotels and restaurants than our native system of graded stars that I am thinking of applying a somewhat similar method to the English country inn, about which no further information is at present available to the wayfarer than that it sells just drink and food and, sometimes, beds.

The following extracts from my Guide will show what a sound job I mean to make of it:—

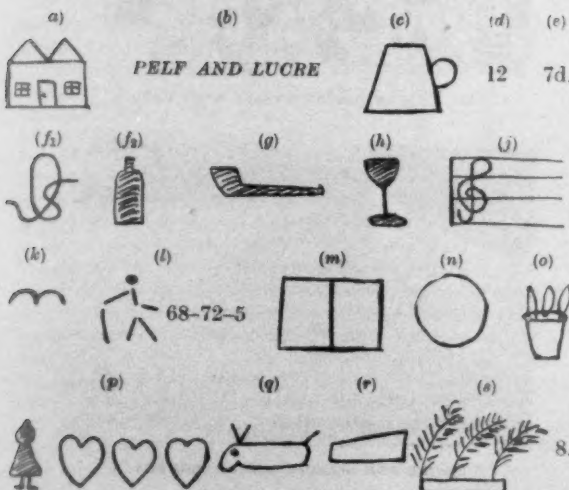
TUMBY-OVER-TUSOCK

"THE DOVE AND PRUNING-FORK"



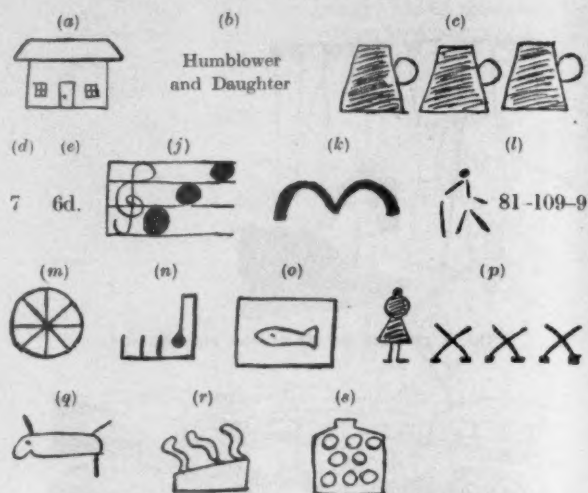
FECHLBWYCHIOG

"THE PLASTERERS ARMS"



DROOPING MAGNA

"THE CROOKED SICKLE"



This is the key to "The Dove and Pruning-Fork":—

- (a) Plain rural exterior.
- (b) Name of dominant brewer. Because in capitals it shows he markets a tolerable brew.
- (c) These are awarded for the artistry with which the stuff is kept. It is cool, fresh and clear but might be more so. Because the tankards are shaded, pewter is available.
- (d) Number of varieties of beer stocked.
- (e) Price of a pint of bitter in the public bar, from which any graduate can easily deduce the rest of the scale.
- (f) Licensed for wine and spirits.
- (g) Licensed for tobacco.
- (h) The sherry is deplorable, the glass being empty.
- (i) Bits of cheese are left lying about in little baskets on the counter for those who like bits of cheese which have been left lying about in little baskets on the counter.
- (j) The bar gets one note out of a possible three for song and general ribaldry.
- (k) This is not one of Landseer's lapwings but shows the relative luxuriance of the landlord's moustache, which many shrewd judges hold to be the surest indication of an inn's prosperity. The symbol used here denotes an average crop of whin.
- (l) The real and boasted ages of the oldest inhabitant, and his tested capacity, in quarts.
- (m) Darts are played.
- (n) Ha'pennies are shoved, as they should be, on ancient timber.
- (o) This refers to the all-important question of *décor*, and shows that the category here is *The Relief of Mafeking*, in which grim engravings of uncomfortable soldiers hang everywhere, backed up by rusty daggers and obsolete fowling-irons.
- (p) To many hard quaffers the personality of the barmaid is vital to the full enjoyment of the beer. This girl gets one heart out of three for looks and one set of crossed beer-engine-handles out of three for geniality.
- (q) This refers to beef, one of the two forms of food known to the wayside tavern. I award up to three horns for quality and up to three legs for cooking, so you see that here we can expect cats'-meat treated with extraordinary discretion. The tail means nothing.



AT HOME

THE AMATEUR INVENTOR

- (r) This refers to the other form, cheese, for which I award up to three maggots. "The Dove and Pruning-Fork" cages something above the mouse-hunting class but in no way tremendous.
- (s) There are four spring-beds, each good for a few troubled hours.
- (t) Loofah, for our purposes, means bathroom. Here there is one.

You should now be in a position to read the other two examples at speed. The translation of "The Plasterers Arms" goes like this:—

"Gin-palace style, first-class beer (*b*) in italics) kept so incompetently that wasps are swarming in it as often as not, and served only in glass. There are twelve varieties, and bitter costs sevenpence. Tied house (*f₁*), fully licensed. Rather surprisingly the sherry is dry and unclouded. The lack of *joie de vivre* in the bar may be explained by the fact that the landlord's moustache is nothing more than a four-ale plantation. Poor imagination and pedestrian capacity mark the oldest inhabitant. Shove-ha'penny is played, as it should never be, on slate (*m*). Spittoons are at hand (*n*). *Décor* falls into the *Purely Domestic* category, in which the more inedible ferns commonly nestle on a locked upright piano (*o*). The barmaid is peerless in aspect but her soul is of drawn steel. The beef boasts decent ante-

cedents but is reduced to sheer leather by the secret traditional processes of the British countryside. The cheese is unspeakable, and a large flock of geese of uneven size and temper have gone to their last rest in the eight beds."

And that of "The Crooked Sickle" like this:—

"Thatched rural outside, and very poor beer inside (*b*) in small type). This, however, is kept with consummate skill. There are seven kinds, and bitter costs sixpence. Life in the bar is magnificently gay, and many would attribute this directly to the extent of the landlord's moustache, which falls within the jurisdiction of the Forestry Commissioners. The oldest inhabitant has been endowed not only with vision but also with an admirable capacity. Table-skittles are attempted (*n*) as well as darts. The interior comes into the category of *The Stuffed Roach* (*o*), in which the walls are littered with fish long unburied, bits of fox, legendary weasels and often a big piece of bear brought home from foreign parts. Pleasing is not the word for the barmaid's appearance, but a kinder and nicer girl you could hardly meet. Beef and cooking are balanced at a low level, but the whole county hums with the cheese. Pickled onions are on offer (*s*)."

Could anything be more useful? Or clearer? Only, perhaps, the beer. ERIC.

Trouble with Parasites

My wife has a kind of brother-in-law called Angus. He works in Africa most of the time but he keeps getting leave to come and stay with us.

This Angus doesn't seem to have much trouble himself, but he's what doctors call a carrier. The last time he showed up, talking to him I lost the heels of my best trousers on an electric radiator. We lived in some bijou luxury flats that year, and not only was I fed up about my trousers, but a lot of water came in which nobody could stop.

When Angus came back from Africa again we'd taken up living in a house. We knew Angus was back because he sent his baggage on. It wasn't really baggage but square tin boxes with the paint rubbed off.

"Well," I said, "that looks like Angus again."

The words were barely out of my mouth before I noticed a number of ants on the kitchen floor.

Now our house has a lot of creeper on it, but we'd never had the slightest trouble with spiders, insects or any of those parasites before these ants. There were near to a dozen of them, off-black in colour, all just dodging about and looking for something.

"Very funny indeed," I said, "one minute everything's all right and the next there's these tins and we're infested with ants."

"I won't have ants in the house," said Julie.

"Neither would I," I said, "but you can't blame these ants. African ants, that's what they are, stretching their legs after the voyage."

"I don't care who they are," said Julie, "they can't stay here."

"All right," I said. I started to go for them but weakly gave in and put the rest outside on a shovel.

"If they're local ants," I said, "that's probably done it."

"How has it done it?"

"You don't know ants," I said. "They've got more brains in their little fingers than you have with all your education. Like as not those few were sent here on purpose. Now they'll tell all the others in the hive and they'll come and eat the place down."

"Nonsense," said Julie.

"If you like," I said, "but I'm going to spray the threshold with paraffin."

When Angus came I told him about the ants.

"Ants?" he said; "I'd just like you to see my shamba. But talk about a trip! The weather in The Bay was definitely the worst in living memory. Even the Captain was sick."

We got off to bed eventually and there were no ants on the kitchen floor then.

I woke up next morning to hear a lot of shouting going on.

"What can that be?" I said to myself, not thinking, and when I got down I found it was ants again.

All over the floor they were, and though some were just scurrying right and left, a significant number were making quietly for Angus's baggage.

"I thought so," I said. "Angus! You come down here."

"What for?" he said.

"Because you've brought back hordes of ants in your tins," I said, "and they're all over our kitchen floor."

"Practically impossible," Angus replied, but he came down, actually smoking a cheroot before breakfast.

"There they are," I said.

"Yes," said Angus, "they look like ants all right."

"What are you going to do about it?" I said.

"Nothing to do with me," said Angus. "Those ants have never seen Africa."

"How do you know?" I said.

"The smallest tropical ant happens to be a shade over two inches long," he said.

"How about when they're hatched?" I said.

"The same thing applies," said Angus.

"They weren't here before," I said.

"Ants come and go like everything else. Out there in the tropics I've known them come and go in a night and leave not a stick of furniture standing. Just chew it into a kind of fine dust."

"Ants can't cross paraffin," I said.

"Paraffin? Out in British East they lap it up. You see some things. Tracking through the impenetrable jungle is an eye-opener, I can tell you. I've seen soldier ants gnawing down giant trees for fun, or putting out forest fires by sheer weight of numbers. There's another sort that picks a herd of elephants clean to the bone before sundown."

"That's enough," said Julie suddenly.

"Get them out of my kitchen."

"They're not my ants," said Angus.

"It doesn't matter," said Julie, "they've got to go."

"All right," I said, and took up a poker.

Angus put his hands in his pockets.

"That won't do," he said.

"What's the matter with it?" I said.

"It's only nibbling at the problem.

You've got to use brains when you're dealing with ants. I remember up-country in The Territory once. I had a Swahili boy named Daniel . . ."

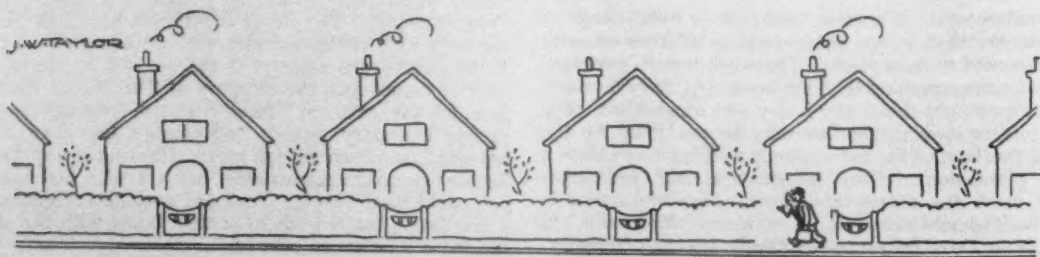
"Do you know how to stop these ants?" said Julie.

"I do," said Angus hastily. "Get me some honey."

"We have no honey," said Julie.

"Without honey . . ." said Angus.

"The fact is honey's practically poison to me," I said. "Jam, yes. Strawberry jam is all right, I find, and . . ."



"I'VE ENJOYED THE HOLIDAY, OF COURSE, BUT THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE HOME."



"I GOT IT FROM THE PAPER, DARLING; IT'S CALLED 'TUESDAY'S PROBLEM SOLVED'!"

"Do you want strawberry jam?" said Julie sternly.

"Now you come to mention it, it's just the thing," said Angus.

He stuck a pile of this jam on the back of an old envelope, and placed it in the middle of the floor.

"What now?" I said.

"About the same as hunting tiger, really," said Angus. "You just sit down and watch."

"You watch," said Julie; "I'm going to have another bath."

"Women haven't the patience for this sort of thing," said Angus. "Keep your eye on the jam in case I miss anything."

"What am I looking for?" I said.

"Ants," said Angus. "Once the news gets round about the jam they'll fill the place."

"I don't like that," I said.

"That's only the beginning," said Angus. "Full of jam an ant is only half an ant. He just goes rolling home."

"With our jam," I said.

"That's nothing," said Angus. "The point is they give themselves away."

"You mean their road out?"

"And in. It's all the same to ants. Then we stop it up. Get it?"

"Yes. I get it," I said.

For a long time we sat there just staring at the jam and saying nothing. Then an ant came nosing about the envelope. He went away again by a kind of circular route, and Angus, who was looking after the bit round the boiler, carelessly lost sight of him. Luckily he must have passed the word on, for shortly after a party arrived and made straight for the jam as though they'd known about it all the time. Soon there was only standing room round the edges.

"There you are," said Angus. "Their one weakness. Now we've only to keep a tally on them."

Keeping a tally involved tracking ant after ant all over the kitchen floor with matches, only to find him back at the jam again. One we were following with Angus's lighter was the first to break the monotony. He disappeared down a hole you couldn't see between two tiles.

"Good enough," said Angus. "That's High Street. Just watch 'em." Several more actually did go down exactly the same place.

"It wants patience," said Angus, "but it's a trick worth knowing."

He made a little ball of soap and plastered it in the hole we'd found.

"Dispose of the stragglers and there you are," he said.

"Well," I said, "if there are none on the kitchen floor by morning I'll give you credit for knowing how to handle ants, Angus."

There were no ants on the kitchen floor by morning. We were just sitting down to have some breakfast when we found out why.

The whole hive was busy in our pot of strawberry jam.

Ecclesiastical Problem

The Vicar is asking for Jumble—

Is there anything funny in that?
To sell for the poor and the humble,
So why should he fidget and mumble
And shuffle his feet on the mat?

Girls titter and men faintly rumble,
The Colonel smiles into his hat;
The Sabbath solemnities crumble—
The Vicar is asking for Jumble,
Now what can be funny in that?



Proprietor. "LOOK, JOE—'E'S PAINTING THE GARAGE!"

Atmosphere

THERE were gipsies down in the forest,
 And with them a narrow cat.
 They pulled up roots for a living
 And for leisure they simply sat;
 Their homes were of hoops and sacking
 And full of wrought-ironwork and mice,
 And everyone said what a curse they were
 And nobody said they were nice.
 There was also a dog called Bultitude,
 And in the evening they sang—
 Sad songs that drifted through the bracken
 With a faint Italian tang.

There weren't any glad-eyed minxes
 With ripe red kissable lips,
 But odd old objects with babies,
 And boys with bicycle-clips.
 And most of the children had children,
 And the children's children had fleas
 That they got from the dog called Bultitude
 In batches of twos and threes.
 But when shadows mingled and made the night
 And hushed the burble of birds,
 Then the forest still stirred with singing
 And soft immaterial words.

The gipsies bundled their babies
 As though they were so much coal,
 And they kept a horse called Bultitude
 Who wanted a bath and a foal.
 They boiled their beans in the bucket
 That they bathed their babies in,
 And were always a little dubious
 Over questions of kith and kin.
 But so soon as the bracken blurred a bit
 And night was burying broom,
 The sound of singing was sweet and clear
 And alive in the pine-blue gloom.

Petticoats burgeoned on branches
 And socks on the fibrous floor,
 And by day the children were wailing
 And the grown-up people swore.
 One of the men was frightening,
 And several eyes were cast,
 And the gentry would make a wide détour
 So as not to have to go past.
 But when they were singing in the evening
 Under a counterpane of dew
 Then we always thought that the gipsies
 Were the nicest people we knew.



HIGH STAKES

Daredevil Runciman (to Messrs. Hodza, Henlein and Hitler). "Mind if I take a hand, boys?"



"I SUGGEST A DIVISION OF LABOUR: YOU LOOK AT THE CASTLES AND I'LL LOOK AT THE ABBEYS."

Practice

"COLONEL and Mrs. Hogg want us to join them for a picnic next Tuesday," said Edith, "and we are going to Seal Island by boat."

"Excellent," I said heartily, "if we can get a good man to row us. There are few more restful things in life than lying back in a boat and watching somebody else row."

Edith smiled.

"That isn't quite the idea," she said, "Colonel Hogg said it would be much pleasanter if you rowed the boat yourselves. He asked me if you could row, and I said I thought you could. Of course I know you can't really row, but I've fixed up for an old sailor to give you lessons every morning at 7 A.M."

"Why at 7 A.M.?" I asked sadly.

"Because you don't want Colonel Hogg to know you are having lessons," she said; "you know how patronising he is if he thinks he is more expert at anything than you are."

I had to admit the truth of this, but still the idea failed to appeal to me.

Getting up at 7 A.M. during the holidays is not my usual way of enjoying myself.

"I don't know that I really need any lessons," I said; "it is true that I have never rowed, but it looks quite easy. You simply sit facing the back of the boat and dip the oar in and pull it out again. I have often watched the Boat Race and wondered why people make such a fuss about rowing."

"You can't back out now," said Edith, "because I have fixed it up with the old sailor. His name is Whiffen and he is the one with the white beard who is always leaning up against the wall outside the *Shipwrights Arms*."

"I know him," I said. "He looks about ninety. Much too old to be dragged out of his warm bed at 7 A.M. For myself, as you know, I enjoy getting up early and tasting the fragrance of the dawn and all that, but to a man of Whiffen's age it might prove fatal. If Whiffen were to die of it you would never smile again."

"I shall certainly never smile again if you refuse to take the lessons," said Edith, "and make an exhibition of yourself in front of Colonel Hogg. When we get home after the holidays

he would just enjoy telling everybody how you caught lobsters . . ."

"Crabs," I corrected her.

"Crabs or lobsters, it's all one. Can't you imagine him setting the table in a roar at every dinner-party next season?"

So eventually I agreed, and next morning I got up at 6.30 and slunk out of the hotel just before seven. It was one of those grey misty mornings that are so much greyer and mistier at the seaside than anywhere else. I found Whiffen by the quay, standing guard over an extremely wet-looking boat.

"Glad to see you, Mr. Conkleshill," he said in a cheerful voice, "the sea is a bit choppy, but it will be all the better for our purpose. I can only spare you a couple of hours, so I hope the other gentleman won't be late. I hope you don't mind me teaching you both together, but I thought I might as well kill two birds with one stone. His name is Hogg, a retired Army man."

"YORKSHIRE COLLAPSE AFTER TEA."
Headline in "News Chronicle."

First bodyline, then this!

Education

DARLING JOAN,—Well I won't ask you if it's very hot in India now because I can imagine how irritating that sort of question is, and there's no news except as I expect you know war breaks out on August 14th so we've arranged a tremendous sailing picnic on that day so as not to be able to buy an evening paper or turn on the wireless because I think it's so much nicer not to know until one absolutely *must* don't you?

Apparently the Germans are going to march into Yugo-Slavia or is it the other one anyway one of those post-war places with hyphens where everybody is rather decent and democratic. Because Hitler says there are 3 million oppressed Germans there living in a place called something like Surbiton though Guy tells me there are millions more being far more oppressed in Italy and Poland which he doesn't lose any sleep over, Hitler I mean not Guy. So apparently at last France and us are going to put our foot down, which apparently is rather a poor disarmed sort of foot but I suppose better than nothing, but anyway I expect all this is ancient history in India because I

always say people in India know all the purple stories long before anyone in London. Can it be that they invent them?

So as there's no news and even Sylvia and Hugh have decided not to get divorced I'll come to the point at once and say I've been to fourteen prep-schools and I think it's all terribly difficult. The swimming baths I've peered into, the boot-holes I've looked at! And really darling it is rather a labour of love because the dreary part is no prep-school masters *ever* have any sex-appeal, but of course I'm terribly fond of your little James and he is my godson and I'd do anything to find him a nice school I even look at the card-tables the other boys make because I always say blood is thicker than water.

The worst time was when I took Guy to one, we had lunch with the headmaster, and Guy just stood about all the afternoon registering indigestion and disapproval and refusing to ask any questions and being far too old-Etonian and reactionary, and when we got away he said why not the local elementary school and altogether couldn't have been less help.

Well darling as I've often said I think the great thing about a school is to have someone you know living quite close with a comfortable house you can go and stay in and see the

child from and better still if they're good-natured and will have him there even when you are not. So I thought at once the Edwards, you know how eccentric they are they don't mind anything, someone once left a puma in their house for six months and they made no fuss and tended it like lambs, so Maisie E. said there was a school close and I thought, Perfect.

Well I went my dear and I don't know what you'd think but it seemed to me that the man was too keen on Sunsets and having Beauty Round Him which I think always means the hot-water system isn't up to scratch and the matron looked to me too pretty by $\frac{1}{2}$ although you know how absolutely broad-minded I am.

Well then I looked at one Mabel told me about near Chrome, but really I don't see why the poor little boys should have to sleep in rooms that really look as though someone was going to be operated on any minute do you? Not a picture, my dear, not a tooth-brush, not even a photograph of anyone's mother taken in 1903, not a thing! I mean after all they aren't all going to be doctors or male nurses are they?

Then there was one that Babbity's boy is going to but I thought the headmaster's wife a bit sinister she said she was a mother to all the boys and simply *threw* herself into them and what I mean is it sets rather too high a standard though I know darling you're a perfectly wonderful mother to James. Still when he comes back for the holidays and you say Run upstairs and fetch my spectacles it might be rather a flop don't you think?

Then I went to 2 in Blankshire and I don't know which was worse. One was terrifically sissy and international and they expressed themselves doing raffia-work and I even believe one of the masters was wearing sandals only I couldn't be quite sure. And of course Guy would have swooned right away if he'd seen the dormitories, *terribly* pretty with Peter Jones chintzes and pictures of boys in other lands. Then the other one was tremendously brisk and British and they were all madly playing football before breakfast and bathing in midwinter and there was a fierce looking sergeant and I think that's all rather fascist and *démodé* don't you, and there were far too many potted plants in the hall.

I did see one rather perfect one with vita-glass windows even in the matron's bedroom, and box-spring beds and concealed lighting and a special kind of milk he said was called Grey Day, but I mean you know how squalid all public schools are and he'll have to go on



"... BUT, DARLINGS, I WANT YOU TO HAVE IT!"

to one afterwards I suppose and does all that box-spring business Fit one for Life?

Well darling I don't know if you're absolutely set on sending him to school but this is my idea and I thought it was worth suggesting. I met an awfully clever young cousin of Bella Calverleys the other night at dinner, very fair you know and with those fascinating bat-ears I never can resist, and he said he did tutoring and he was terribly sweet and full of absolutely right ideas and I'm sure a good influence and example and everything and what I thought was why not send little James to us and have a tutor? What I thought was, not much trouble and very little expense and he might be useful to answer the telephone and at dinner parties you know how it is when some man can't come at the last minute. And Guy has to go to South Africa on business all next winter so I thought it might be rather a cosy arrangement and so I wondered what do you think because I'm all for individual Attention, aren't you?

Places

SOME people collect
Stamps and Old Masters,
Queen Anne pepper-casters,
Pistols and kreeses,
And orchids, all blotchy and flecked
Like diseases,
And China and Chippendale chairs,
And stuffed heads of bison and bears,
And fiddles,
And butterflies stuck through their
middles,
And Lord knows what
Rot . . .
And others, of course, collect
Money . . .

But it's funny—
I don't
Collect even plain £.s.d.—
It won't
Stick to me,
And I don't expect
Ever it will;
So let those that can have their fill
Collecting things—I collect
Places . . .

You don't need glass cases
To keep them in,
Nor museums and strong rooms to heap
them in;
You don't have to be for ever worrying
about
Whether the rot's rotting them or the
damp's rusting them;
You don't have to pay anyone for
hurrying about



"YES, I'M THE FELLOW, CHUM, BUT DON'T GIVE ME AWAY. I'DESERTED 'COS I WANTED A SMARTER UNIFORM."

Dusting them;
You don't have to be always finding
a fly in the ointment
The way these collecting blokes do,
And eating your insides out with rage
and disappointment
Because someone else has got a bigger
and better one than you . . .

Yes, even if you can't spend them
Or lend them,
It's rather a jolly sort of a notion
That you've got
The Atlantic and the Pacific and the
Indian Ocean,

And the Rockies and the Andes,
And Ascension and Trinidad and Juan
Fernandez,
And the veld and the pampas and the
prairie,
And the Sahara and the Kalahari,
The heights and the deeps . . .
And no matter how old you may
get,
Or how hungry and cold you may
get,
Or whether your coat's full of holes
And your boots haven't got any soles,
They're your own, all the lot,
And for keeps . . . C. F. S.



"OH DEAR! I AM SO TIRED OF NOW."

Misleading Cases

What is a Newspaper?

(Before Mr. Justice Twigg)

SITTING in the Vacation Court, his Lordship to-day gave judgment in *The Swim Girl* case. He said:—

"This is an unusual action. In form it is an application to make absolute a rule nisi vaguely in the nature of the old *mandamus* calling upon the Postmaster-General and the Newspaper Registry Office at Somerset House to show cause why they should not register *The Sunday Sensation* as a newspaper.

"In these days, when so much is heard about the 'Freedom of the Press,' it is as well to remember that the proprietors and publishers of newspapers are still compelled to register (under the Newspaper Libel and Registration Act, 1881), though not, as in the first half of the reign of Queen Victoria, to deposit a sum of money when they do so. Further, since a newspaper counts as a 'book,' a copy (sometimes two) must be sent to the British Museum, the Bodleian Library

and the other statutory libraries, where they are received, no doubt, with ill-concealed delight by the librarians.

"In return they enjoy certain special advantages. A newspaper 'registered at the General Post Office' may be despatched through the post at lower rates than ordinary communications or even 'printed papers.' Further (though this, I think, is not a statutory privilege), they are allowed to market their wares in the streets, through stationary or itinerant salesmen, and to advertise them by the making of loud cries, in a manner which would not be permitted to any other trade, except at a recognised market. It is odd, by the way, that our Parliament and people should take so strong an objection to the quiet negotiation of bets in a public street when they do not mind the loud selling of sensations, disasters and scandals in the same street.

"Now, for many years *The Sunday Sensation* has been registered as a newspaper both by Somerset House and the General Post Office. In the present year both have refused to do so on the sole and simple ground that *The Sunday Sensation* (with

which is now incorporated *The Swim Girl*) is no longer a newspaper.

"The proprietors reply, with indignation and surprise, (a) that their publication is a newspaper, and (b) that that question (whatever the correct answer) does not concern the two offices named, whose simple duty it is to register upon demand.

"Let us consider the second point first. No doubt in the past the registration of *The Sunday Sensation*, as of *The Sunday Times*, has in fact been almost automatic. But is there any necessity or justification in law for saying that it must be automatic? I cannot think so. Suppose, for example, that someone were to put forward as a 'newspaper' a publication which consisted entirely of extracts from the Bible on the one hand, or of obscene pictures on the other. For different reasons both would be illegal. No one, surely, would suggest that either Somerset House or the Post Office was bound to register such sheets as newspapers simply because the proprietors gave to them that honourable name. It follows that registration is not a matter of right but of fact or reason, and that the authorities have a power

to say, in certain cases, what is and what is not a newspaper. The two cases posited are, admittedly, extremes, but they indicate the kind of reasoning which should be applied to all cases on the wrong side of the borderline, and the task of determining where that borderline lies is very familiar to our courts of law and, in this affair, is by no means uncongenial to me.

"I turn, then, to the question of fact. Assuming that some publications can rightly be described and registered as newspapers, and some cannot, in which class ought the King's Courts to place *The Sunday Sensation* (and *Swim Girl*)?"

"'News' is a wide and generous term. *The Oxford English Dictionary* offers the following description (heading 2): 'TIDINGS: the report or account of recent events or occurrences, brought or coming to one as new information: new occurrences as a subject of report or talk.' It may include events of every kind and degree of importance, from the declaration of a war to the termination of a marriage. It may be of cosmic, continental, national, local or merely professional interest. The information that a new type of potato-chipper has been perfected is not less 'news' because it is exciting only to the readers of *The Fish-Friers' Gazette*. But if, say, seventy per cent. not of one but of every issue of that paper were occupied by photographs of potato-chippers the question would arise whether *The Fish-Friers' Gazette* had not ceased to be a newspaper in the proper sense and was now a mere circulating photograph album.

"What applies to potato-chippers may be thought to apply with at least equal force to swim-girls. Let it be remarked at once that this Court has no objection to photographs of young ladies in bathing-dresses, as such. On the contrary, the Court enjoys them as much as ever. Nor is the Court much impressed by the contention that the frequent contemplation of young ladies in bathing-dresses must tend to the moral corruption of the community. On the contrary, these ubiquitous exhibitions have so diminished what was left of the mystery of womanhood that they might easily be condemned upon another ground of public policy, in that they tended to destroy the natural fascination of the female, so that the attention of the male population was diverted from thoughts of marriage to cricket, darts, motor-bicycling and other occupations which do nothing to arrest the decline of the population. But the Court expresses no opinion on that. And,

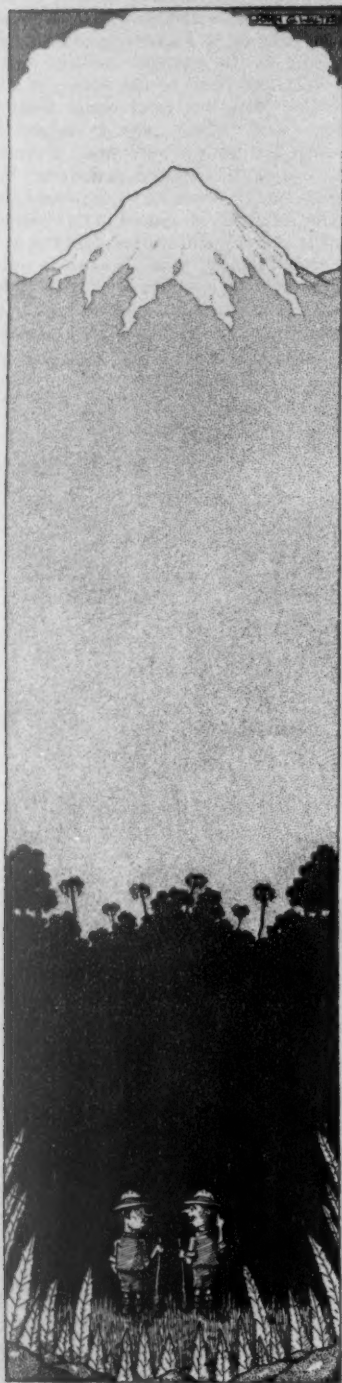
apart from that, the photographs appear to be socially beneficial—at all events they are beneficial to the Court. For at least the young ladies are radiantly happy, which is more than can be said of most of those whose doings are recorded in the papers. And whether they are poised upon a rock or diving-board, bounding into the ocean, or coyly teasing their companions in the water, it is evident that they are healthy and it is assumed that they possess or will acquire some skill in swimming. All this must surely provide a useful example to other young persons, and, in a country so much dependent on mastery of the sea,

might even prove valuable for the defence of our shores.

"But that is not the point in issue. The evidence, as I have already hinted, is that in the summer months some seventy per cent. of the space of *The Sunday Sensation* (and *Swim Girl*) is filled with blithe young ladies in similar but scanty costumes. Even in the winter the proportion does not fall by as much as might be expected, for swimming still continues in swimming-baths and tropical waters, and the new models for next year's costumes must of course be exhibited for the judgment of the public. All this may be admirable in its way: but, in any strict



"LISTEN, VERA—WHO IS DRIVING THIS CAR, YOU OR YOUR MOTHER?"



"THE NATIVES USED TO CALL IT 'THE MIGHTY HILL OF PARADISE THAT MEETS THE MOON,' BUT I'VE RENAMED IT 'MOUNT EMILY LOUISA BAGTHORPE,' AFTER AN AUNT OF MINE."

sense, in such proportions, can it be said to be 'news'?

"It would be fair at this point to turn to the small remainder of the paper, for here perhaps may be found, though in miniature, the essential elements of a newspaper. What do we find? One witness unkindly said that the remainder of the paper consisted entirely of headlines and hysteria. The headlines are abnormally large (indeed, where it is thought necessary to employ headline-type an inch in depth to announce that a lady has been divorced, one wonders what would be required for the outbreak of a world-war). But the messages below the headlines are printed in type abnormally small. There is evident here not merely a deficient sense of proportion but, I should say, an elementary technical blunder. For it is the purpose of the headline to attract attention to the full story below—it is, as it were, the label on the meat. But when the labels are so large and loud and numerous as here the general effect in the end must be distracting. The eye is dutifully prepared to accept the flaring invitation to the bigamy at Surbiton when it is diverted by another beacon, equally brilliant and alarming, to the latest banned book. But in the next column or page another scandal, not less distressing, again seduces the attention. And in each case the actual story is printed in type so small and difficult to read that any distraction is doubly powerful.

"However, once more, that is not the question before the Court. Do the 'events and occurrences' thus presented, wisely or not, constitute news in such a proportion as to make the paper a newspaper? The weight of the evidence is against that view. No one has suggested that every newspaper should give an equally full and laborious account of all the major events and movements of the day, the work of Governments and Parliaments, the situation and relation of foreign governments, the achievements of art, literature and the sciences; nor, on the other hand, that any paper should be bound to ignore those painful but enjoyable stories of misfortune, scandal and corruption which are so large a part of the tale of mankind. But it was powerfully urged that a habitual concentration upon the latter, coupled with a habitual exclusion of the former, would raise a presumption so strong as to shift the onus of proof on to the complainant in these proceedings. It was said also by counsel for the Crown that, allowing for the many and desirable differences in the class and character of newspapers, every newspaper

claiming privileges as such ought at least to offer to its readers some small scrap of authentic information on the most important of the events of the day, and, if possible, some modicum of helpful comment or guidance.

"The head of an advertising firm said bluntly that in his opinion *The Sunday Sensation* (and *Swim Girl*) provided no such thing. That suited him: and that was why he used the paper. There were some good articles in it, but nothing you could call news. There were no leading articles at all. That was grand.

"This piece of evidence, coming from one who had no axe to grind (whatever that may mean), was for me the last link in a solid and impressive chain. If I find for the Crown in this case the familiar cry will, no doubt, be heard that the liberties of the Press so hardly contested and finally won in the last century are being whittled away. That cry will here be wholly inappropriate. In the first place the liberties of the Press were won for the kind of Press that then existed, for organs of thought, of character and refinement. Most of our great papers deserve that description to-day; and one might censure the black sheep without casting a single shadow upon them. But, in the second place, there is no question here of tampering with anyone's liberties. The proprietors of this paper will still be at liberty to print and disperse their entertaining album of photographs and anecdotes, but they will not be permitted to call it a newspaper and so to enjoy the privileges attached to that name by the Crown and Parliament. I find for the Crown. The rule is discharged."

A. P. H.

Irresponsibility

EUROPE is rearming. Neutral ships are being bombed. Czecho-Slovakia is sitting in a bed of nettles. And meanwhile here is the bulk of the British nation lying obliviously about in bathing-drawers in the sun and building sand-castles—*sand-castles!*

Outwardly I may appear to be part of the bulk. But if I am spread negligently in a deck-chair with various parts of me bared to the sun, it is solely in order that the beneficial influence of sunshine and ozone may stimulate my brain into producing an article which shall blast thousands of readers out of their soul-destroying lethargy.

It is essential that every man, woman and child should be awake to the urgent crisis now threatening the peace-loving nations. And yet look at almost any of the figures reclined around me



"WHY, JIMMY, YOU NEVER EVEN HURRIED."

"I DIDN'T HAVE TO, MUMMY. THERE WAS NO ONE BEHIND ME."

in various stages of bareness and broiledness. Look, for instance, at this elderly gentleman in the orange bathing-wrap. Yes, do look! That must be the all-Europe record for waistlines, and I believe, I do believe he's going to sink into that deck-chair. But no—he's seen the notice which says **DECK-CHAIRS 3d.** And where was I?

Well, anyway, how many of these people are crisis-conscious? How many of them even know where to run for a gas-mask or where to find the nearest decontamination station? How many realise that, far away beyond that expanse of tranquil sea, thousands of their brother men, half naked, with the pitiless sun beating down upon them, are straining every nerve in the dogged effort to acquire a uniform shade of tan all over? (No, that isn't at all what I was going to say when I started.) But when you consider it, it is rather curious to remark all these people toiling away with their lotions and their pastes, and yet ninety per cent. only achieve patches. Brown

arms and a red nose. Or brown legs and a blistered back. But I seem to have got off the point again.

The root of the trouble is that the great blind multitude of the ordinary people has never learnt to look a problem fairly in the face and get to its very core, to delve at facts until the fog of Delusion melts before the trumpet call of Truth; in short, to Think. They are content to follow anyone with a good-sounding idea and a loud voice to shout it in; like those gulls by the edge of the water, all careering after the big one with a bit of something dead in its beak. Quark! now another one has got it and they're all running in the opposite direction. . . That gull has a distinctly dictatorial bearing, a sort of totalitarian tilt of the bill. . . Of course a penguin would do it even better, especially the salute. Yes, a penguin would take the rôle of a dictator admirably; but—let us face the question squarely—could a dictator as adequately play the part of a penguin? Imagine MUSSOLINI sliding down

an iceberg *wump* into a nice blue Arctic sea, and the ripples spreading away to the far horizon where the Midnight Sun—

By Jove! I was almost asleep. This will not do. British people, awake and look about you! Take Japan, now; or take Russia . . . or take about six yards of seaweed, the wide brown kind, and fly it above your head as you run on warm sand clad in little pink bathing-drawers. A pointless occupation, you say? but quite as good as any other on a warm, blue, hazy day . . . I mean, look at HITLER and MUSSOLINI and repatriation and partition and the price of milk—or, alternatively, look at nothing at all except an invisible spot in an imaginary plane somewhere between the blue sky and the blue sea, and keep on looking until . . .

Oh, well, anyway, what I meant to say is, the race of English holiday-makers is shamelessly lethargic and irresponsible, and it is high time that some clarion voice from the void did something to rouse them. I mean us.

Fractured Friendships, or An Anglo-Argentine Imbroglia

"Alice," said my sister to me one day, "you're getting into a rut."

I was not getting into a rut, but I knew what she meant. It meant that she wanted a change and was going to use me as an excuse.

She used me as an excuse. Our furnished flat in Tangiers was given up and I was dragged over to an hotel in French Morocco.

The weeks and months went by and Emily gradually collected, as she always does, a large assortment of sixpenny English books and Tauchnitz editions. They overflowed from her night-table into her wardrobe and she complained that they were beginning to interfere with the neat distribution of her clean clothes. She was just wondering whether she could persuade the hotel Arab boys to accept them in lieu of their monthly tip when she suddenly thought of Mr. Rossmore.

Mr. Rossmore is—or rather he was—an old friend of ours who lives in Buenos Ayres. We had carried on a desultory correspondence with him ever since we left South America some fifteen years ago. It seemed to Emily that nothing would give him greater pleasure than to receive a few English books to while away his evenings.

She selected what she considered were the best five books of the bunch

and, wrapping them up carefully in brown paper, addressed the parcel to him. The postage in francs was so negligible when converted into sterling that she felt quite a glow of satisfaction at the thought that she was elevating Mr. Rossmore's mind at such a small expense to herself.

In due course we received a letter from him thanking Emily for the books, though he admitted that he had not yet had time to read them. To return the compliment he sent her three copies of a Buenos Ayres newspaper which he thought might interest her for old times' sake. Now Emily has always had a very high opinion of the Buenos Ayres newspapers. She thinks they are excellent; but as these were six weeks old and had been battered about a bit in the post they had lost most of their news value and a great deal of their legibility. She could not honestly say therefore that they interested her very deeply. None the less she appreciated the kind thought that had prompted the action.

In the meantime the books in her wardrobe and on her night-table had steadily increased. She realised that if she was to make any real headway in diminishing the stock she would have to dispose of them on a rather more liberal scale. Accordingly during the

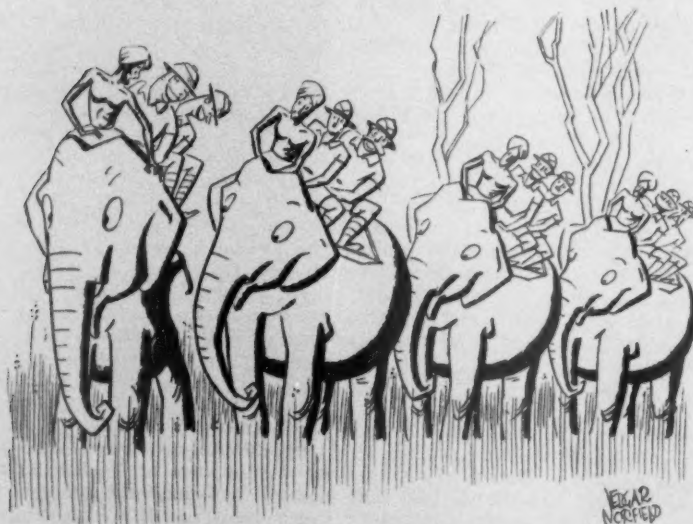
next few weeks she sent off quite a number of little packages to Mr. Rossmore, each one containing a gift of two or three books. The pile of literature in her bedroom began to shrink very satisfactorily. She foresaw that if she could keep up the good work for another two months or so she would be able to get rid of the whole lot.

Unfortunately something then happened that rather upset her calculations. Mr. Rossmore, in response to the generous flow of books she had been sending him, evidently felt it incumbent upon him to show a generosity at least equal to if not greater than her own. He began to pepper her with bundles of all sorts of Argentine daily newspapers and weeklies, both in English and Spanish, as well as occasional Brazilian magazines containing photographs of Society beauties in Rio de Janeiro. It almost looked as though he had been having a spring-cleaning and had sent us every piece of printed matter he could find in the house. It annoyed Emily a little because if there is anything she hates more than collecting books in an hotel bedroom it is having a mounting pile of old newspapers on the top of her trunk which have to be removed every time she wants to get out her cheque-book.

However, by throwing them into the wastepaper-basket as fast as they came in she was more or less able to dominate the situation. All the same she was so irritated at being subjected to this treatment that she decided to teach Mr. Rossmore a lesson. She decided to send off her books to him in larger quantities and at double the pace to see how he liked being inconvenienced in the same way as he was inconveniencing us. In the short space of two weeks she managed to clean her room out and dump some sixty books altogether on Mr. Rossmore. She hoped that that would finish him off and put an end to the nuisance.

I regret to say that it didn't. About two months later several bulky parcels arrived that nearly took the wind out of Emily's sails. She opened them and found that Mr. Rossmore had sent her four dozen copies of the Buenos Ayres telephone directory for the previous year.

Emily was very silent and morose all that day. She appeared to be turning something over in her mind. The next morning she went out without saying anything to me and bought up the entire stock of a second-hand bookstall, consisting of some eight hundred disreputable old paper-backed French novels, and shipped the whole



"SAHID, WE ARE FUNCTURED."



"AND WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?"

"I'M GOING TO BE A NURSE, GEORGE IS GOING TO BE AN ENGINE-DRIVER, AND WILFRED'S GOING TO BE A GREAT DANE."

consignment off to Mr. Rossmore in ten packing-cases. And that was not all. Wearing a pale but determined look on her face she sat down at her table and forwarded one cheque after another to the heaviest and most gigantic popular magazines in the U.S.A., asking them please to send their publications to Mr. Rossmore for the next twelve months.

That finished Mr. Rossmore. We never received another Latin-American newspaper or telephone directory from him again. We never even had a letter

from him. But we heard from an indirect source that he had suddenly left Buenos Ayres for England and was hoping to call in at North Africa to see us.

Well, we didn't know what he wanted to see us about, but we weren't taking any chances. We had a strong suspicion that he was coming over to strangle Emily. We packed our trunks and without leaving any address behind slipped hastily over to the Canary Islands. We thought it would be better on the whole for Emily's health.

Another Impending Apology

"Owing to the recent illness of the Mayor (Councillor —) it had been arranged that the Deputy-Mayor (Alderman Mrs. —) should welcome the delegates on behalf of the Borough. It, therefore, gave added pleasure that the Mayor, having recovered from his illness, was able to be present and perform this duty."—*Berkshire Chronicle*.

"Dr. Ley in a speech at Cologne to-day touched briefly on the colonial question.

Dr. Ley also touched briefly on the colonial question."—*Daily Paper*.

He must have bounced.



"ALL RIGHT, I'LL TAKE THEM. AND NOW WHERE CAN I GET A BOOK?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Masks Off!

MR. EUGENE J. YOUNG, who "has been entrusted for more than thirty-five years with editorial supervision of despatches on world affairs by two of the most notable American newspapers"—he is at present cable editor of *The New York Times*—has had opportunities which may well be unique of *Looking Behind the Censorships* (LOVAT DICKSON, 10/6) at the realities of current history. He does not pretend to know quite everything, but his claim to know a good deal more than the rest of us is obviously justified. Of the validity of his conclusions there is greater room for doubt. For in postulating self-interest as the only motive force in politics, in neatly tabulating the interests of the various Powers and logically deducing therefrom the probable course of their future actions, is it not possible that he is unduly simplifying the issue? His cynicism perhaps has made him rather naïf; and it is not altogether easy to accept his theory, attractive though it is, that the hesitations and inconsistencies of English foreign policy are the mask of a profound Machiavellian cunning. But the facts which he tells, with a lack of sensationalism which carries conviction, are immensely interesting and often of vital import—as when he exposes the internecine jealousies which embarrass the Reich and the true relationship of the Duce with the House of Savoy. His findings on the *raison d'être* of our own Abdication crisis must be received, for the present, with a suspension of assent.

Welsh Pastoral

Trust a born solitary with a passion for nature and a gentle acceptance of human encounters to keep a good diary! The Rev. FRANCIS KILVERT—whose cure in the eighteenth-century lay at Clyro, in Breconshire—left a journal in twenty-two notebooks off which Mr. WILLIAM PLOMER has skimmed the cream of eight. Its writer prided himself on

owning a manuscript poem of DOROTHY WORDSWORTH'S and on retrieving an eye-witness's account of her brother; and it is safe to say that anyone who cares for DOROTHY'S journal or WILLIAM'S poems will revel in the similar if lesser sensibilities of *Kilvert's Diary* (CAPE, 12/6). His living was far from idyllic, and the superstition and vice of his incredibly poor parishioners are an uncomfortable gloss on the abounding prosperity of their betters. KILVERT is happier in the modest homes: bestowing blankets on the blanketless, hearing the miller's daughter play the harpsichord or reading "a chapter on Thankfulness" to the ungrateful Watkineses. He dislikes cards, loathes rook-shooting and entertains a prejudice—happily dissipated—against his neighbour, Father IGNATIUS. His diary is a perfect bedside book and it is ardently to be hoped that a second volume will follow.

What the Edwardians Read

It is interesting to note what books our average ancestors actually read, if only because the ardent reader (nineteenth-century type) is obviously dying out. Wireless and cinema have devoured the public of "OUIDA" and MARIE CORELLI, and (going a step higher) it is difficult to imagine a bus containing twelve simultaneous readers of one new novel—a tribute actually accorded to *Robert Elsmere*. After the Victorians (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 10/6), the second volume of Miss AMY CRUSE'S inquisition into the literary provender of our forebears, sets out to show what was devoured between 1887 and 1914. It was distinctly poorer fare than the Victorian spread, and the happiest thing about it is the generosity of the writers to each other, Mrs. HUMPHRY WARD finding a publisher for *John Inglesant*, HENLEY rousing the *Observer* office to enthusiasm over *Barrack Room Ballads*, and ARNOLD BENNETT saluting FRANCIS THOMPSON as our richest natural genius since SHAKESPEARE. Miss CRUSE discusses every brand of British fiction, the increasing taste for

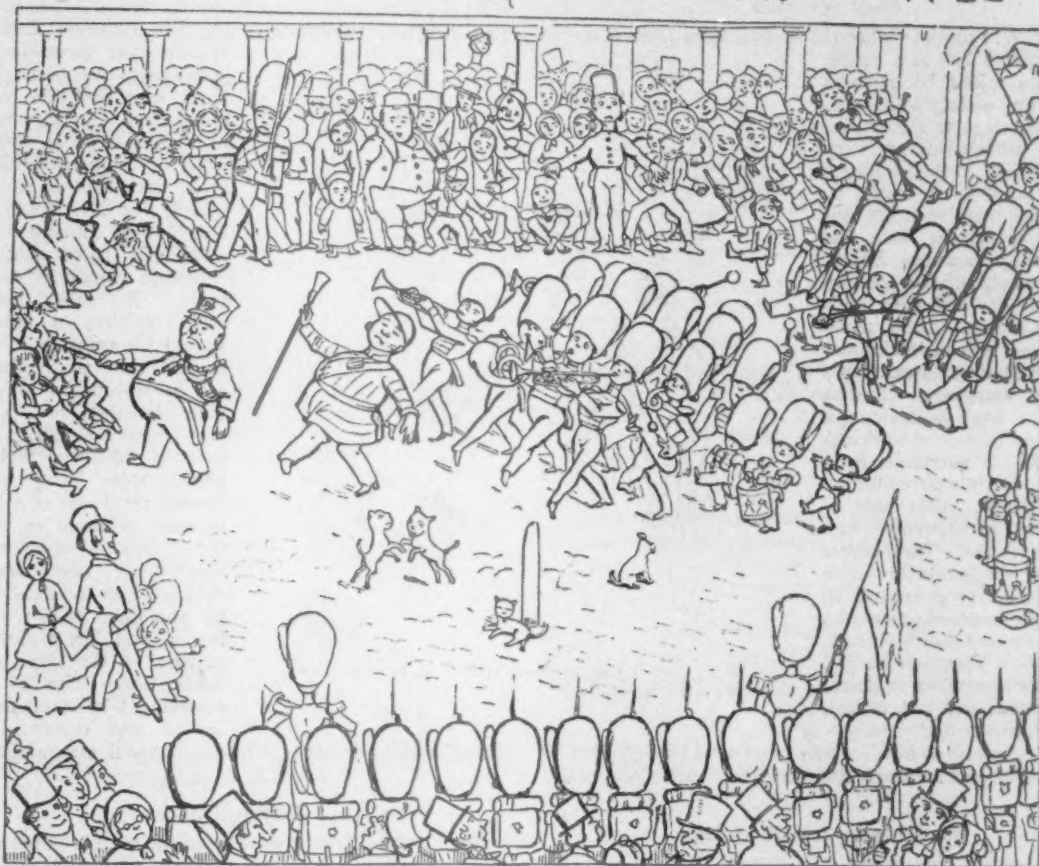


"I SAID 'CHECK,' MATE—NOT 'CHECK-MATE,' MATE."



MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ENGLISH IN 1849.

No 22.



"BRITISH GRANADIERS A MOVING GARD AT ST JAMES'S PALACE YARD."

Richard Doyle, August 11th, 1849.

foreign imports, French, Russian, Scandinavian and American, and the new journalism that made its débüt with *Tit-Bits*—altogether, a vivacious survey and an illuminating one.

From Sinai to Pisgah

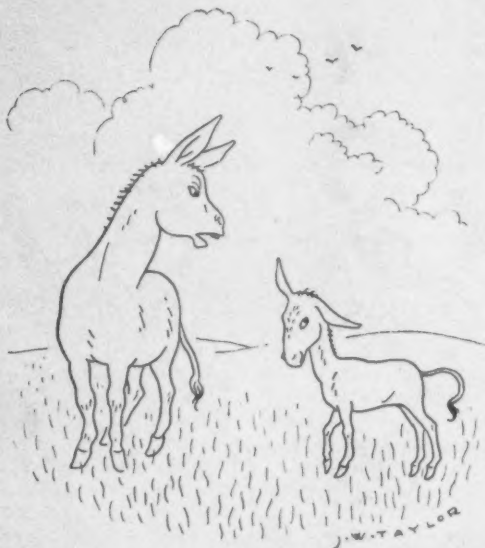
Having, as recorded in an earlier book, followed the fortunes of MOSES the Lawgiver from the Nile to Mount Sinai, Mr. LOUIS GOLDING and his two companions, LUCAS and JIM, proceeded *In the Steps of Moses the Con-*

queror (RICH AND COWAN, 7/6) to the end of that epoch-making itinerary. The course was not always easy to set, for both tradition and the experts are uncertain and contradictory, and Mr. GOLDING was determined to leave no probable station of the host unvisited. Nor, as for those older wanderers, was it without its perils, for if the motor-car gave the modern pilgrims an advantage over the Israelites it also, among the precipices of Arabia Petraea, added to their chances of disaster; while, as cautious officials told him in vain, for one of Mr. GOLDING's race to traverse

Transjordan is in these days an adventure not lightly to be undertaken. But he came safe to journey's end—to write as fine a travel-book as one may wish to read. Mr. GOLDING has an imagination richly endowed and a pen equally apt to describe what he has seen with the inner and with the outer eye. Steeped in the lore of Pentateuch and Talmud he can recreate the old story; and he can brilliantly describe the face of a stern yet fantastically beautiful land and the personality of sheikh or camel-driver. He lives simultaneously in past and present, and, if MOSES is his hero, he kindles at every trace of the heroic and almost as legendary LAWRENCE.

Meat for Men

Mr. H. W. FREEMAN's hero in *Andrew to the Lions* (CHATTO AND WINDUS 7/6) is a young man who might be frowned upon in any society which preferred marriage to mistresses, but his adventures are very good reading. At the beginning of the book he is trying to make ends meet in Italy, and forming a *liaison* with the attractive grass widow, *Elvira*, begins to help in her workshop and finds his skill with tools a key to success. Later, when his mistress is dead and he goes back to Suffolk, Mr. FREEMAN's intimate knowledge of that county is used in drawing a very vivid picture of working-class life. A summons from *Marisa*, *Elvira*'s daughter by her marriage, takes him to Spain and nearly involves him in the civil war. Then comes—rather unpleasantly—love with *Marisa*, tragedy and an arbitrarily imposed career as a lion-tamer, and that is the end. If *Andrew*'s irregularities and his creator's insistence on Rabelaisian detail will not offend, the book can be highly recommended—scarcely as milk for babes, and not for the plot but for its telling, for its characters, its scenes and its knowledge of life.



"... AND A LITTLE MORE HEE-HAW, PLEASE, AND A LITTLE LESS HI-DE-RO."

For Fishermen's Birthdays

Mr. PATRICK CHALMERS (Mr. Punch's P.R.C.) is one of the very few fishermen who have seen a live Loch Leven trout run over and killed by a Putney bus in the Strand, but in addition he belongs to an angling body almost as select, those good fishermen who are scholars in riverside life and can employ their pens as expertly as their rods. *The Angler's England* (SEELEY, SERVICE 8/6) is one of the *English Scene* series, edited by Mr. ERIC PARKER; and it is a kind of summing up of the many aspects of English fishing, not with intention to instruct (though how much one can learn from it!) but to comment lightly, with verse and song and fancy, from a rich store of river wisdom. One

of the best chapters is in defence of the thesis that SHAKESPEARE must have been an enthusiastic member of the brotherhood because so often he dragged in technical fishing terms and used them familiarly. Another delightful essay gives LEECH the palm as P.R.A. of the angle, for Mr. Briggs, and points out that by the test of having portraits painted in the panoply of their sport, fishermen have proved themselves far more modest than fox-hunters. Mr. CHALMERS is refreshingly not a purist, for keen as he is on the fly he admits that to defeat coarse fish calls for greater knowledge, while to use a spinning-rod properly he considers the hardest trick of the lot.

Poisonous Work

At the end of the penultimate chapter of *Not to be Taken* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) Mr. ANTHONY BERKELEY repeats four questions which previously he had put to those who met his book in serial form. A large number of replies were received but none of them was fully correct; and this is not wonderful, for Mr. BERKELEY's concluding chapter supplies additional proof that he is complete master of the surprise. In case, however, any suspicion of unfairness should be aroused, it is well to add that these questions are by no means unanswerable. The scene of this drama is in a Somerset village, where a little colony of well-to-do people were living placidly enough until one of the most popular of them (a man of the "without-an-enemy-in-the-world" type) suddenly died. Then a hubbub led by the dead man's brother began, and Mr. BERKELEY's picture of the local inhabitants under the stress of excitement is excellently observed and drawn. In its class this story deserves to be marked with several asterisks.

Physical Jerks

Mr. E. C. R. LORAC is not content with a single murder in *Slippery Staircase* (COLLINS, 7/6), but proceeds to follow up one ingenious and fatal crime with another even more cleverly contrived. The scene of these barbarities was in a large London house which had been converted into flats, and that most calm and useful detective, *Chief-Inspector Macdonald*, had dusty and dirty work to do before he could put his hand upon the murderer. The devices in this story may be too elaborate and the atmosphere too electrically tense for simple-minded people. But whatever faults Mr. LORAC may have as a writer of mystery novels he undoubtedly possesses the saving grace of creating men and women who are something more than mere conventional puppets.

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Charivaria

An American visitor has commented on the fact that the orchestra at the country hotel where he put up played tunes that were popular in the States five years ago. The landlord has since adjusted matters by calling the musicians *Ye Olde Worlde Jazze Bande*.

★ ★ ★

"FAT SHEEP VALUES EASE"

Heading in N.Z. Paper.

Is that news?

★ ★ ★

Several cases of grass-fires on race-courses have been reported of late. That's the worst of those red-hot favourites.

★ ★ ★

A traveller recently stated that a bullfight in Spain is as dull as an English cricket match. And just as much depends on who wins the toss.

★ ★ ★

Elevating Influence

"After a quarter of an hour we found ourselves in Billingsgate, passing the Coal Exchange, where they fix the price for the whole country, with the Monument in the foreground..."—*Daily Mail*.

★ ★ ★



"Who wants to stop in all day during this delightful weather?" asks a correspondent. Quite a lot of batsmen, is the answer.

★ ★ ★

A recent news film showed us a new invention that enables a car to move sideways. So the advent of the taxi-crab cannot be far off.

★ ★ ★

It is very unwise, a health expert points out, to run during a heat-wave. Our last pound of butter didn't care.

★ ★ ★

A political writer declares that the present fears of war are groundless. This we take to mean that the actual venue has not yet been definitely decided upon.



The worst of the hire-purchase craze, a writer remarks, is that the buyer is for ever paying instalments. This will be news indeed to many hire-purchase concerns.

★ ★ ★

"BEETLES PLAY HAVOC

ON KESWICK CHURCH ORGAN"

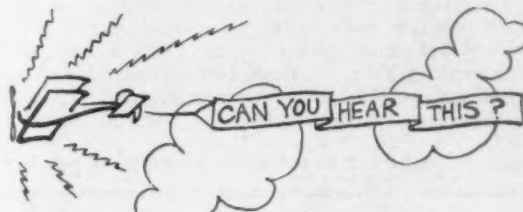
Headings in "West Cumberland News."

They might have chosen something quieter.

★ ★ ★

According to *The Daily Mail* the Meteorological Office was puzzled recently by the non-arrival of a thunderstorm which was expected in London. It only transpired afterwards that its visit had been postponed owing to the weather.

★ ★ ★



The text of a Parliamentary Bill against aerial advertising has been published. After all, the sky's the limit.

★ ★ ★

Overcrowding at the Polls

"With regard to the war debt question, a poll taken in March showed 74 per cent. in favour of collection in full, 42 per cent. for some reduction, and 11 per cent. in favour of cancellation."

Sunday Paper.

★ ★ ★

The cost of learning to fly will soon be from half-a-crown an hour upwards. And of course practically nothing downwards.

★ ★ ★

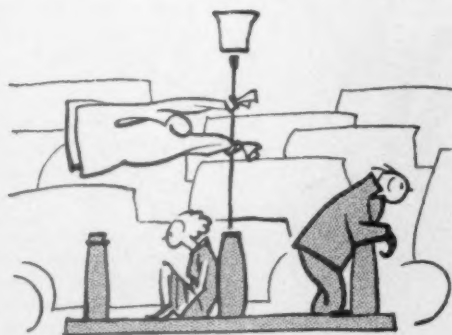
We gather from a recent report on the industry that another of the by-products of coal is an occasional profit.

★ ★ ★

"The melon is the healthiest member of the fruit family," says a grower. We had an idea it tended to be seedy.

★ ★ ★

There are now 100,000 more cars on our roads than there were this time last year. The decrease in pedestrians is not yet available.



Lucy is Convinced

DEAR GEORGE,—The knot is now tied although a little up set on the first day of the honeymoon almost made it a slip knot.

It happened like this. On my pre nuptial Saturday I took the Mitre darts club out as they had had a whip round to give me a little something, the sum being raised being thirteen and two made up to a pound out of the accident fund. We went to a music hall and to the bar first. When we got to our seats the next item was interval so the boys said time for a quick one and we were just pushing past again when the manager came out and said is there per chance a plumber in the audience? I am one I said but have left my tools at home. Please ladies and gents the manager said, pipe down on the har hars, this is serious viz Madame Tosca the sea lion tameress has lost the sacred jewel of the mystic orient while hand washing and says without it her sway over the sea lions is null and void and they are prone to get ugly so unless the gent who has just spoke will rescue same we look like being up a gum tree, will you come Sir?

Enchantay I said and went. That is her room the manager said, being a red rag to a bull to her I darent enter. Undaunted I went in and said bonjoor madame or nuit rather ou est le jewel perdu pendant lavant? Coo she said, hark at him speaking French and all, how culture does spread. Bilingualism apart I said, arent you French? No more than what plaster of Paris is she said, will you join me in a beer?

Didnt we ought first to extract this here jewel you have

been and lost? I said. I am doing this for an advert she said, as to the jewel it is a glass eye really and incidentually is no more lost than tomorrows trains, Im playing merry hell with the manager because he is not a nice gentleman to know being the sort my mother would warn me of if living which she isn't due to staying too long under an elephant which sat down unexpected during her circus turn, will you have a beer for the second time? Okay I said and did.

Hay ho she said, life with sea lions is not all beer and skittles though I never was fond of skittles, London this week then up north for some time, why not join me in the act? you could dress oriental and say alley oop to the sea lions, I have took a fancy to you. Ere the sun resets I said distant, I shall be wed. Who to? she said. I wont bandy her name about backstage I said, I love her. Ha she said, love is all my eye and Elizabeth Martin bung ho.

Then a little podge came in with a camera and said evening Rosie, ill be okay for tomorrows paper due to everyone fighting shy of being done in and such like, is this the hero? None other she said. Shake he said, please both pose dramatic. Madame Tosca held the glass eye, I pointed at it and a sea lion was asked to lay sideways and clap but just as the man said watch for the dicky ducky Madame Tosca kissed me extra fervent. Please please I said, unarm me do, gratitude is welcome but liberties I will not have taken with me and went. I had forgot all about it by morning due to me and the boys spending the night using up a cask of beer which we thought might go funny if the thunderstorm broke which incidentually it didn't but you cant be too careful.

Well George during the wedding and the do after Lucy seemed subdued, I put it down to being nervous and tight shoes but as soon as we were in the train she said William Twiss I have a bone to pick with you and I mean no lucky wishbone and produced a paper saying sea lion panic sensation see page three on which was the picture of Madame Tosca and me very much amalgamated and underneath a long story all false except the punctuation.

Oh William William Lucy said, you men are just bees buzzing from hither to thither, my suspicions have long been aroused though. Your suspicions seem to be pretty bad cases of insomnia I said, she is hardly one of Mr. Cochrans young ladies either as to face or shape, even if she was like Venus you and Miss M. West all in one I wouldnt care two straws or even one for her. Thats right she said, shove me in between the armless beauty and the armful of It.

Listen I said, I was but the innocent kissee. Dont make me laugh she said crying, were you tight or what? A gentleman is seldom tight and never loose Lucy I said, please dry your tears and up, make an exhibition of yourself if you like but I for one will not pass the turnstile to see it, even if I wanted to see her again I couldnt because she herself told me she has been engaged to appear up north for some time. Why ever didn't you tell me before? she said, of course she was photoed kissing you just to make him jealous. Who? I said. This peer she is engaged to she said, it doesnt say about that in the paper though. Well no I said, perhaps he wants it kept quiet because his Mother isnt keen on him marrying into a family of sea lions, also the House of Lords is a bit finnick. Oh I see she said.

Kindly remember the late Caesars wife Lucy I said, when her husband came home after months away and said Ive been doing a bit of fighting dear she just said suppers ready and asked no questions. She was above suspicion so if you are going to suspect me because answering a professional call I get photoed it doesnt say much for centuries of progress does it? William she said Ill be so far above suspicion in future that Caesars wife will look like an underlay to it,



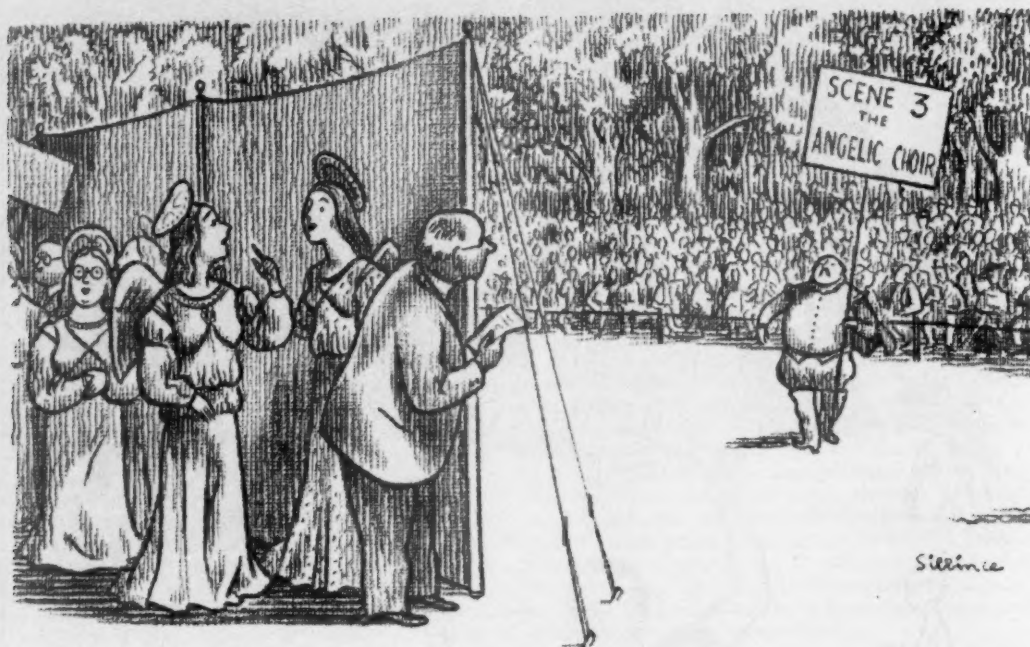
"... AND ANOTHER REDSKIN BIT THE DUST."



A POPULAR ENCORE

Re-enter Ariel Brown, singing. "Come unto these yellow sands!"

[The Government is reported to be planning a great extension of paid holidays during the next Parliamentary Session]



"TOOTS DARLING, IS THIS BLASTED HALO STRAIGHT?"

those sea lions were clever though weren't they? What does this betoken? I said.

Well she said, you said you were going there with the darts club but knowing men are but men I thought I wonder? so I went too and sat ten rows behind you. I would rather you hadn't of I said. Oh she said, I wasn't unprotected, I went with Alfred an ex flame of mine who is still flickering. That was hardly comeel so I said. You had your fling didn't you? she said. That's different I said, a husband's job being to protect his wife unless he gets about a bit he doesn't know what he is supposed to protect her from. Well she said, now I shall be able to be a real help and discuss your job with you won't I? Lucy I said, love is a passion not a poison so if you want me to dote on you you mustn't ever be a antidote again.

Fear not she said, my evening with Alfred convinced me you are the one for me, he is handsome and affectionate but not a steady fellow, in fact after being out with him I realise if I was married to him I would never be able to trust him out of my sight.

Well George love will find a way I suppose but oh for a short cut. I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—No P.S. this time George.

Everything is Different in Africa

EVERYTHING is different in Africa.
Strange stars by night look down,
And threepence is called a ticky
And a florin's like half-a-crown.

Everything is different in Africa;
Hardly a thing's the same,
And any that are are mostly
Called by a different name.

"Everything is different in Africa,"
I thought—till my gaze did roam
By chance to some words familiar
That seemed like a voice from Home.

And still, as the train rolled onward
They sang through my brain all night,
While the dust of the Kalahari
Sat on me, fine and white.

For they spoke of a strap I clung to
In a train I used to know,
And Waterloo in the rush-hour
In a time that's long ago.

"Do not throw out of the window"—
Thus went the haunting tune,
Like a magical incantation,
Like a druid's mystic rune—

"Bottles or other articles"—
Never such deed be mine!—
"Likely to injure anyone
Working on the line!"

C. F. S.

Don't be Conservative

"Have something different. Cut out dainty sandwiches in attractive card patterns. Made of pure aluminium."—Stores List.

Lives of the Stamp-Collectors

William Wordsworth

I NEVER knew Wordsworth personally. But my uncle, who knew the poet well, always said, "If Wordsworth had never existed it would have been necessary to invent him." I need hardly say that I am in complete agreement.

I well remember hearing the story of my uncle's first meeting with Wordsworth. Round about the year 1812 my uncle had a small surgery in the Hoxton Road (it used to be No. 38 on the left-hand side, but has now been pulled down to make room for Sir Walter Scott's birthplace). For five years he never had a single patient; yet he never quite lost hope. And eventually his faith was justified. One gloomy morning a man came to tell him that there had been an accident. Full of joy my uncle set forth. But when he reached the scene of the accident he found that it was only a poor cripple run over by a barouche. Two doctors were already on the spot, bending over the dying man and declaring that his life was of little value to society. My uncle approached, but the other doctors barred his way, shoving him aside and tripping him up with their stethoscopes until they had made quite sure that life was extinct. My uncle was ready to cry with vexation. Five years' effort had gone for nothing. Then he saw before him a solitary figure with folded arms. As my uncle looked he caught the figure's eye and in a flash he realised the truth. It was William Wordsworth. All was over!

Yet for ten years my uncle did not

see Wordsworth again. When he did it was in very different circumstances. My uncle was on a lecture-tour now—a tour embracing all the confines of this island, but, though in an altered form, he was still at his unremitting toil in the cause of truth and beauty. "*Divide et Impera*" was still his motto, and "No Gratuities" was still graven on his heart. And the subject of his lectures was—William Wordsworth!

On a certain August day he was to give a lecture in the village hall of Grasmere itself, the very *fons et origo*, the very *tempora et mores* of the poet whose glory he was to celebrate. Let us try to imagine the scene in the dim village hall, lit with oil-lamps (it was long before the days of Coleridge) and filled with rustic lovers of literature, shepherds and farmers who seldom spoke unless it was in rhyme, or at any rate blank verse of a high order. Let us imagine the anxious train of thought in my uncle's mind. Was the hermit of Dove Cottage going to honour them with his presence? Was the white-haired stamp-collector of Rydal Mount about to grace that gathering? Was the melodious wizard of Grasmere about to step down from his place among the eternal snows? Was the old boy going to turn up?

The minutes passed and still Wordsworth did not come. My uncle began his lecture, but there was no enthusiasm in his voice. He confused Wordsworth with Byron, mentioned Humperdinck as the author of Wordsworth's play, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and lost his way with Crabbe Robinson in his circle. The audience fidgeted more and more, and when my uncle stated that Wordsworth's intervention in the Battle of Borodino came too late to save the franc from collapse there were open expressions of dissent, rising to shouts of indignation and culminating in the throwing of a horse-collar on to the platform. The lecture became a free fight, in which two blackboards were broken and my uncle lost his wrist-watch. Just before the lights went out my uncle was almost certain that he saw the imposing figure of Wordsworth himself, standing at the back of the hall, biting his finger-nails, with a preternatural shine in his eyes. Then my uncle received a swinging back-hander from the Leech-Gatherer, who was nearby, and the poet disappeared from view.

My uncle never visited Grasmere again. But although he never received a penny from his lecture, and although he never got back his wrist-watch, he still continued to speak of Wordsworth everywhere as the greatest of poets, the

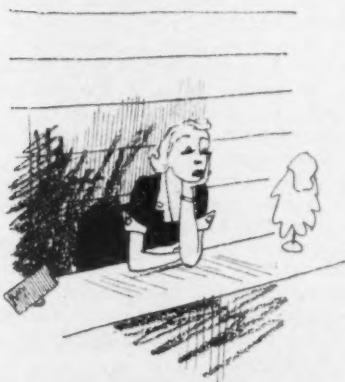


"I SAY—I CAN'T GET WATER TO RUN OFF MY BACK YET!"

truest of friends, and the owner of the largest private lighthouse in the British Isles. Wherever he went he sang his praises. Then one winter day in 1850 the blow fell. News came that Wordsworth lay dying in the British Museum. The nation heard the news with stupefaction. All work was stopped for an hour on the railways. Groaning, the whole country held its breath. Fate had struck and stricken hard.

But it is a fact that when my uncle presented himself at the lodge of the British Museum and gave his name, the dying poet disclaimed all knowledge of him. Wordsworth's younger brother, Cardinal Newman, was at the bedside and came out to my uncle with a large and ugly-looking life-preserver under his arm. After some account of his association with Wordsworth, my uncle asked whether the poet were indeed so near death that he was unable to distinguish friend and foe, let alone one who had been more to him perhaps than either. The Cardinal, who seemed to be in a trance of grief, or else was very hard of hearing, said that he had no doubt it was all for the best, but that his cousin the Bishop (later the excavator of the crater of Stromboli) was out at that time, helping with the final arrangements for the Crimean War. If he cared to call again later . . . My uncle was too heart-broken to reply. What could he do with this conspiracy against him? He gave the Cardinal a formal good-day and turned on his heel with dignity. It was only later, when he noticed that the Cardinal seemed unaware of his existence, that he permitted himself a single sob.

So the long association of these two figures, each pre-eminent in his own way, the one for poetry and patriotism, the other for the cardinal virtues and for strict attention to business, was severed at last. A chapter was ended, a door closed, and the moving finger wrote "Finis" on the cloudy scroll of Fame. Wordsworth, as my uncle used to say in his homely way, was dead.



"WE HAVE IT IN STOCK ALL RIGHT, MADAM, BUT IT'S ON THE TOP SHELF."

Idiot's Delight

SOMETIMES when I look back on that dark hour I marvel that I came through it and kept my reason. Even now, more than a month afterwards, the strain that my terrible experience put upon my nervous system shows itself in a kind of tic or twitching of the face, and my friends tell me that my hands tremble more than they used to do in the old days. There are dreams too—nightmares in which I am forced writhing through the same horrible humiliating sequence of events.

If I seem in what follows to be describing one of these nightmares rather than the actual experience, it makes no difference. The one is always a faithful replica of the other.

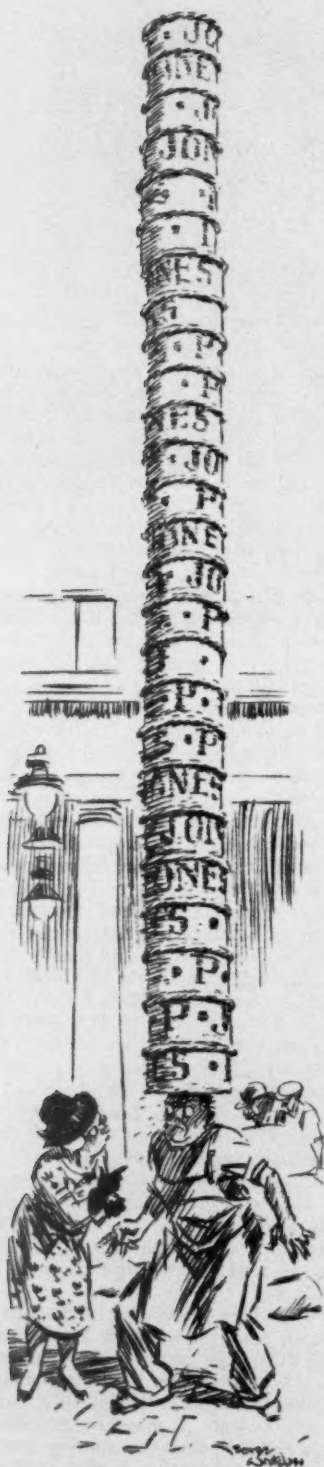
I am sitting with a heavy suitcase beside me in a third-class carriage at Waterloo. There are some six minutes to go before the train is due to start and the compartment is empty. Then a man gets in. I do not look at him—indeed throughout all that is to come I never once glance at his face—but I am aware that he has taken the corner seat diametrically opposite to mine. He has brown boots, but I cannot say that at this stage I definitely hate the man. He is little more to me so far than a reminder that if any more people get in my suitcase will be a nuisance. I decide to take time by the forelock. I rise to my feet and place the bag, not without effort, on the ridiculously inadequate rack immediately above my head. It is a big bag, as I have said, but seen from below it is enormous. It projects. It positively beetles. It has an air of being poised upon an axis, about which it is prepared to pivot at the slightest provocation. For a while I eye it apprehensively with my head tilted sideways and upwards in the manner of a pigeon or domestic fowl. I do not feel at my best in this position, and after a little I determine to forget about the bag and take up my evening paper with a resolute air. But it is no good. The harder I endeavour to concentrate upon the story of Nellie, who brought a breath of the dew-scented countryside into the dock at Marlborough Street, the more convinced I become that if the train starts with a jerk that bag will be down on my head in a flash. I shall dislike that, I know, and I come to a sudden decision. I rise again to my feet and replace the bag upright on the floor. No one else has got in. It is doing no harm.

Ah, we are off—with a jerk. My

bag falls from the upright to the prone position with a surprisingly loud bang. I stoop to readjust it, but with my hand halfway to the handle I pause. If I put it upright, what is to prevent it falling down again? And I do not want it to fall down again. I am getting just a little tired of my bag. Also I do not like that man in the corner. He has said nothing, and I have not looked at him, but I have a feeling that he is amused. I have a conviction, which I cannot explain, that he thinks I am making rather a fool of myself over my bag. I resent this. I cannot see that I have done anything with my bag which has not been inspired by the dictates of pure reason. I have acted throughout with the noblest motives and on the most severely logical grounds. It is therefore all the more surprising to me to find a hot rush of colour suffusing my cheeks and to feel a sudden urge to take refuge behind my paper.

I open the paper to its fullest extent with a slightly defiant *crack* (for I hate to be ruffled), and one of the inner sheets, which must in some way have got out of its correct alignment, slips to the floor. I feel the man's eye on me as I bend down to retrieve it, and this confuses me, I think, for I try to put the sheet back into its proper position with my left hand while holding the rest of the paper at one corner only with my right—a thing no man can do. It is only by means of a quick scooping movement of the arms and a sudden shooting out of both legs that I am able to save the whole lot from fluttering to the ground. As it is, three pages evade me. I determine to ignore them. I raise my eyebrows in a rather whimsical way, in an attempt to look like a man acknowledging without rancour the tricks that fate plays upon the best of us, then I gather up the sheaves that remain and gaze sternly at the market price of Textiles and Wool. The page is upside-down, but I do not care. I would as soon look at the market price of Wool one way up as the other. And I am achieving my object: I am getting cooler. To increase the effect of nonchalance I try to cross my left leg over my right and, catching my toe in the handle of my suitcase, am precipitated almost on to my face on the opposite cushion. To save myself I am obliged to let go of the paper. . . .

I try to console myself, while I am collecting the sheets, by the reflection that if this were a film and I were Harold Lloyd I should be paid high



"HAVE YOU A SMALL CAULIFLOWER—JUST ABOUT ENOUGH FOR FOUR PEOPLE?"

prices for such a performance, and for a moment I have the wild notion of trying to convince the man in the corner that I am practising for a vaudeville act. But I dismiss the idea. For one thing, I do not see what more I could do to convince him than I have done already. I am to find this out shortly, as a matter of fact. But at the moment I feel I have done all that can be done in the way of single-handed buffoonery. When I have got all the sheets in my hands again and try to hold them in front of my steaming face I see at once that my only defence, poor as it has been, is now gone. There is no longer in this festering mass of print any resemblance to a newspaper—only a ragged paper ball, with uncouth edges sticking out all round and in one place, like a comet's tail, my old friend the market price of Textiles and Wool streaming gaily down. A sudden passionate loathing of what was once a respectable evening paper comes upon me, I feel that I want to have nothing more to do with it—ever; I squeeze it fiercely into a yet tighter ball and throw it on the seat beside me. Then I thrust my trembling hands into my pockets and gaze fixedly out of the window. I have no longer any doubt at all that the other man considers me insane.

Within two minutes I have taken off my hat and laid it also on the seat. It does not fall off. Emboldened by this success I decide to go a step further. I will have a pipe. I have not yet learnt, you see, to leave well alone. I take my pipe and a new two-ounce tin of tobacco from my pocket and I remove the little rubber disc from the underside.

"Phceee-ee-oo" goes the tin.

The man in the corner remains silent, but he cannot deceive me. I am aware that he is consumed with a great hurricane of internal laughter. An ice-cold rage comes upon me. I will show this man that I am not the clown he takes me for, if I kill myself in the attempt. I am pondering the best way of setting about this, when the lid of my tobacco-tin, which I have placed carelessly on my knee, slips smoothly to the floor. I make an involuntary grab and the tin itself hurries in the wake of its playmate. Then I too join the party.

For what seems an age, long after I have scraped back the last shred of tobacco into the box, I crouch panting under the seat. I am hot and dishevelled, my collar is askew, and I have no plan at all, save to crawl along to those hateful yellow boots and bite their owner savagely in the ankles. I



"THERE'S VARIETY AT EIGHT O'CLOCK TO-NIGHT, FRED."

am contemplating the nature and extent of the legal penalty for doing this when I become aware that the train is slowing up for my station. Hastily I regain my seat. I realise that my last chance is at hand. If I can make a dignified exit I may still reinstate myself in the opinion of this man whom I would so gladly murder. But obviously if I am to get safely out without falling on my head on the platform or breaking a window with my umbrella every step must be carefully considered beforehand. In my present form nothing must be left to chance. I begin hurriedly to lay my plans.

The train stops. The platform, thank heaven, is on my side of the carriage. With my right hand I slide back the catch and thrust open the door. Then with the same hand I take my umbrella from the rack, pick up my bag from the floor with my left, and with the utmost sangfroid step out into the fresh heady air of Clapham Junction.

"Your hat!" observes a voice.

Blind with rage and mortification I step back into the carriage and seize my hat. Then, as the train begins to pull out, I leap to the platform and jam my hat on to my head.

It does not fit so well, I find, with the whole of an evening paper crammed inside the crown. H. F. E.

Lament

PALE hands I loved . . .
Before I bought those seeds . . .
Where are you now?
How did you get like that?
I only shoved
A little mud about,
Pulled bits of thistle out
Only . . . ungloved . . .
Patted the seed-bed flat
Only, I vow,
Grubbed up one patch of weeds.
Pale hands I loved!
Pale hands, pink tipped—My hat!
Where are you now?

Letters to Officialdom

XXI.—*Re Holiday Complaints*

To the President, The British Medical Association, B.M.A. House, Tavistock Square, London, W.C.1

DEAR SIR,—Forgive me for presuming to approach the British Medical Association for advice on how to treat the maladies that I, my wife and daughter have contracted while on holiday at Blight-on-Sea. My own practitioner at home has gone away; two doctors here in Blight-on-Sea refuse to take a serious view of our complaints; yet, as I understand from one authoritative source, they may prove chronic, while from another equally authoritative source I learn they may prove fatal.

We are naturally anxious to avert either of these consequences. Of course we could approach a specialist if we were suffering from identical complaints, but they are not identical. They are totally different. We should want three specialists. Mine is a skin malaise occasioned by exposure to the sun; my wife's, exhaustion; and my daughter's, Holiday Hysteria. The

authoritative sources to which I refer are advertisements evidently written by men with a profound knowledge of medicine.

I am particularly concerned about my wife. Why she should suffer from exhaustion while on holiday I cannot think. She does no work. (She works at home, of course, yet never is exhausted there. Sometimes when I, my daughter and the maids are helping with the work I marvel at the way she manages to keep so fresh.) But here she leads a life of relaxation. She plays clock-golf after breakfast until eleven, then has an hour's tennis with me, then bathes before lunch and does nothing between lunch and tea except go for a walk along the cliffs, and after tea we go for a row or bathe again or play croquet until dinner, after which we quietly end the day at a cinema. Yet when she wakes in the morning she complains of feeling tired.

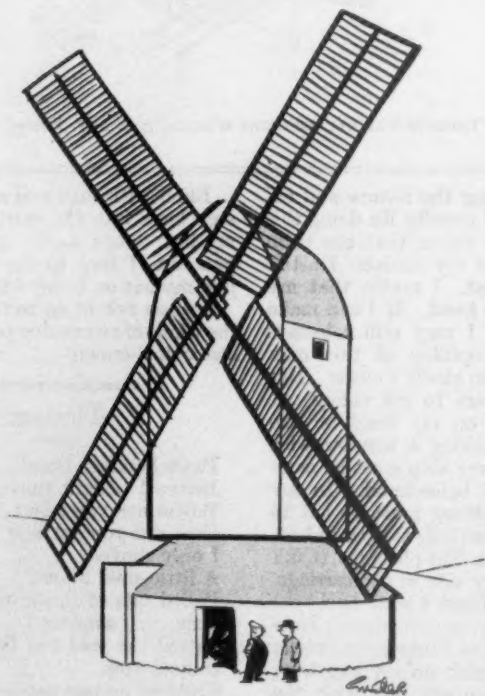
I was at a loss to understand this until I found out from an advertisement that this was Morning Yawning, a dangerous condition curable only by Chunk's Tablets. I bought her a large box of Chunk's Tablets, but she still complained later in the mornings of what I soon perceived was Matutinal

Lassitude, a dangerous condition curable only by Pitterpat's Pills. I bought her a large box of Pitterpat's Pills, but even these did not ward off the exhaustion she felt during our daily walk between lunch and tea. A lady in the hotel, however, warned her that this was Afternoon Anhelation, a dangerous condition curable only by Topheavy's Tonic Wine. I bought her a large bottle of Topheavy's Tonic Wine, but in spite of it my wife always felt exhausted in the evenings. I could only suppose that this was Evening Torpor, a dangerous condition curable only by Schmell's Herbal Extract. I bought her a large bottle of Schmell's Herbal Extract, but she still feels tired every day—particularly towards nightfall—and now even sleeps badly.

So far all this has cost me £3 16s. 5d., and I am at my wits' end. Two days ago I had to dose *myself* with Schmell's Herbal Extract. My fatigue disappeared and I had a bilious attack instead. When I got up I found that my daughter had been sucking Chunk's Tablets one after another and was feeling faint, while a chambermaid who had helped herself to a tumblerful of Topheavy's Tonic Wine was sleeping off her excess in an empty bath. These incidents just show how patently these medicines are meant for one particular condition, and how, administered or taken injudiciously, they can be brought unfairly into disrepute. The fact remains however that my wife is still exhausted. I have tried taking her thoughts off these four dangerous conditions from which she is suffering by making her participate more energetically in holiday amusements, but in consequence her exhaustion has become even more marked.

It gives me therefore little satisfaction—indeed I am exceedingly distressed—to have to add that retribution for deriding these advertisements has overtaken my daughter. "One day, Hyacinthe," I often said, "you'll be getting Holiday Hysteria. Five out of seven holiday-makers have it"—and to my horror she now shows every symptom of that dread affliction. She bathes before breakfast, runs all the way back to the hotel, rushes on to the beach again before her breakfast is digested, returns too late for lunch, bolts it, beats it for the beach again, bathes directly after tea and spends the rest of the evening at the Fun Fair.

What am I to do? Only Stickler's Malt, apparently, can cure this Holiday Hysteria, and if I give her Stickler's Malt she will at once guess what is wrong with her. So far I have kept her in ignorance of her condition, though I have had to discontinue slyly putting



"No, Sir, we don't use the wind any longer—nowadays we turn them round by electricity."



"STRUTH, SIR ALFRED! AND I HAD THE RUDDY 'OLES ENLARGED."

Stickler's Malt in her breakfast coffee and her tea as this gave her such indigestion that I had to dose her with Baggybreck's Basalt, Brine and Belladonna Capsules. Her digestion is now so good that I fear she may be sickening for Abnormal Appetite, a dangerous condition curable only by Rumstuff's Mixture. However, as Abnormal Appetite can only produce fat, not fatal consequences, I am not so worried as I am about her Holiday Hysteria, particularly as I have been giving her without appreciable result Thisand-that's Cure for Thinness. My great dread is that she may become neither fat nor thin, which I learn from another advertisement is a dangerous condition indicating the "cessation of the normal bodily functions" and is curable only by Vertigo's Vitaminised Vitriol.

Then there is my own sorry condition. Exposure to the sun has given me a blistered back. This seemed to be getting better and I had almost forgotten it when luckily I read that "quick amelioration of this seemingly innocuous affliction is a danger sign," and that the blisters would spread all

over me unless I used Sloppo the Sunburn Slayer. No sooner had I bought a pot of Sloppo and applied it than I read that blisters of this sort could only be cured by sunbathing in the nude under a piece of Greaseglaze Transparent Sun-Diffusing Paper, which "diffuses the ultra-violet rays evenly over the body and prevents the debilitated corpuscles from receiving more than they should receive (0.05 volts per sq. m/m)."

As I had already applied Sloppo I was in a quandary. I did not know what the combined effect of Sloppo and Greaseglaze Paper would do to my debilitated corpuscles. Then I read that sunburn blisters, *howsoever already treated*, should be rubbed with Cizzler's Concentrated Caustic Cake to prevent them from developing into boils and so into carbuncles.

My immediate difficulty is that having applied Cizzler's Cake after giving Greaseglaze Paper a trial on top of Sloppo, I cannot bear to put on any clothes at all, and have to remain in my hotel bedroom. My wife, determined to overcome her exhaustion, is

still living on tablets, pills, tonic wine and extract, and my daughter is quickly reaching that stage of "undue exhilaration and overmuch jubilation which, without Stickler's Malt, can only end fatally."

Please let me know *by return of post* what we can all do.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—You may care to pass on to the manufacturers the fact that Stickler's Malt, if spread over a piece of paper and put on the window-sill, catches flies as well as a fly-paper does. If the paper be then immersed in a dilute solution of Schmell's Herbal Extract the flies will die immediately. I discovered these interesting facts while sitting all day in my bedroom, garbed of necessity in only my pyjama-trousers and a pair of boots to keep my feet from swelling.

A.R.P. Note

"Thirty-seven dead fowls, some of which were turning green, and all of which smelt as though decontamination had set in . . ."
Kent Paper.

Nice, Nice

You don't happen to know, do you, the way to bring up your child to be a booklover? I thought not. Now I do—your child. I don't possess a child, and heaven preserve me from trying this system on it if I did, but I do possess the July issue of *The Narrator*, which arrived this morning from Canada, and what I don't know about bringing up anybody else's child to be a booklover is no more worth knowing than what I do.

I am completely ignorant of the functions of the Literary Guild in Canada, but it seems that *The Narrator* is its official publication. The July issue—which appears to have arrived rather late: I hope no other populariser has forestalled me—contains an article by Gertrude Green, an Article for Parents, called "Are Jane and Peter to be Booklovers?" If I were a child, I would rather put a phial of prussic acid than this article into the hands of any parent of mine.

"To begin early is, I believe," the lady writes, "the secret of making booklovers." Hold on tight and watch how early she would begin. "As soon as little hands reach for things," no less.

"Let the mother take the baby's hand, after it has been thoroughly cleansed"—I forgot to tell you you'd need a piece of soap—"and rest it upon the cover of an attractive book and say words such as 'nice, nice' or 'lovely book.' A little later the book is given to him to hold, while he does so, mother tells him about the nice book. Before he shows signs of weariness the book must be taken from him and carefully put on its shelf."

I doubt whether there ever was a more emotional approach to the mighty problem of literary taste. Mother is bringing baby up to be the perfect lending-library subscriber. The complete booklover, he will love books, all books, irrespective of their contents, if any. Set him down in the Reading-Room of the British Museum and he will experience a paroxysm of emotion, loving every book in the place. Later in life his misguided mother will often find it impossible to get him to bed because he wants to stay up loving a book that happens to have caught his eye (*How to*

Grow Forty Bushels of Wheat per Acre on Worn Soil). I need hardly say that it is the outside of this book, as of all others, that he likes. What goes on inside he regards as incompetent, irrelevant, immaterial and incapable of inspiring affection. Nice, nice. Lovely book.

Such is the youth of the reader in deference to whose imagined prejudices you forbear, author, to leave out the commas before and after "however." That is the child who will grow up into the man for whose particular amusement you spend two hours thinking out the best way to put the last sentence in Chapter Twenty-Seven, unaware that he would get just as much fun out of a nicely-bound volume of the Leeds directory.

I admit he may buy your book, if he likes the look of it. Second-hand.

The most disturbing thing about this method of manufacturing booklovers is that it works. That, at least, is what I judge from the note at the end of the article: "This article has been prepared with the help of parents and teachers to whom we express appreciation." We are to assume that all over the Dominion of Canada there are little perishers of both sexes who have been successfully inoculated by their parents with an absolutely unreasoning passion for every kind of literature with covers on it. What I want to know is (apart from the way in which a roll-top desk locks all its drawers at once, which I have never been able to fathom), where will it end?

Nobody has to worry, of course, except the small minority exemplified by you and me, who have at heart the welfare of the human critical faculty. Authors, any authors, will be able to sell their writings at so much per book-length of seventy thousand words (any words); publishers will be able to pour their works into a bookseller's shop as if they were filling a tank; booksellers will be able to take a book from a shelf without looking and sell it to a customer as if it were a piece of cheese. Probably it will be a piece of cheese.

For real literary taste, when all children are brought up like this, will be practically dead. No one will any longer take any trouble over writing or reading. Criticism will be a farce. The intelligence of the human race will be sapped at its roots. There will be epidemics. The roads (pardon me while I work myself into a passion)—the roads will be impassable. Communications will break down. Channel steamers will be in collision. Beer will go flat. There will be plagues of locusts. The brass ball will fall off the top of the Monument, and rats will be discovered in the Stock Exchange. A Marquis will be summoned for riding First with a Third Class ticket. Consols will sag.

Possibly I exaggerate. Yes, and really I am being disingenuous too; for if one thing is certain, it is that if I had a pet ostrich I should bring it up to be a booklover. I should take its claw, after it had been thoroughly cleansed, and rest it upon the cover of *Gone With the Wind*, at the same time saying, "nice, nice" or "lovely book." A few days of this, a little concentration, and I have every hope that my pet ostrich would eat *Gone With the Wind* down to the very bottom of the Old South. Could booklove go further?

R. M.



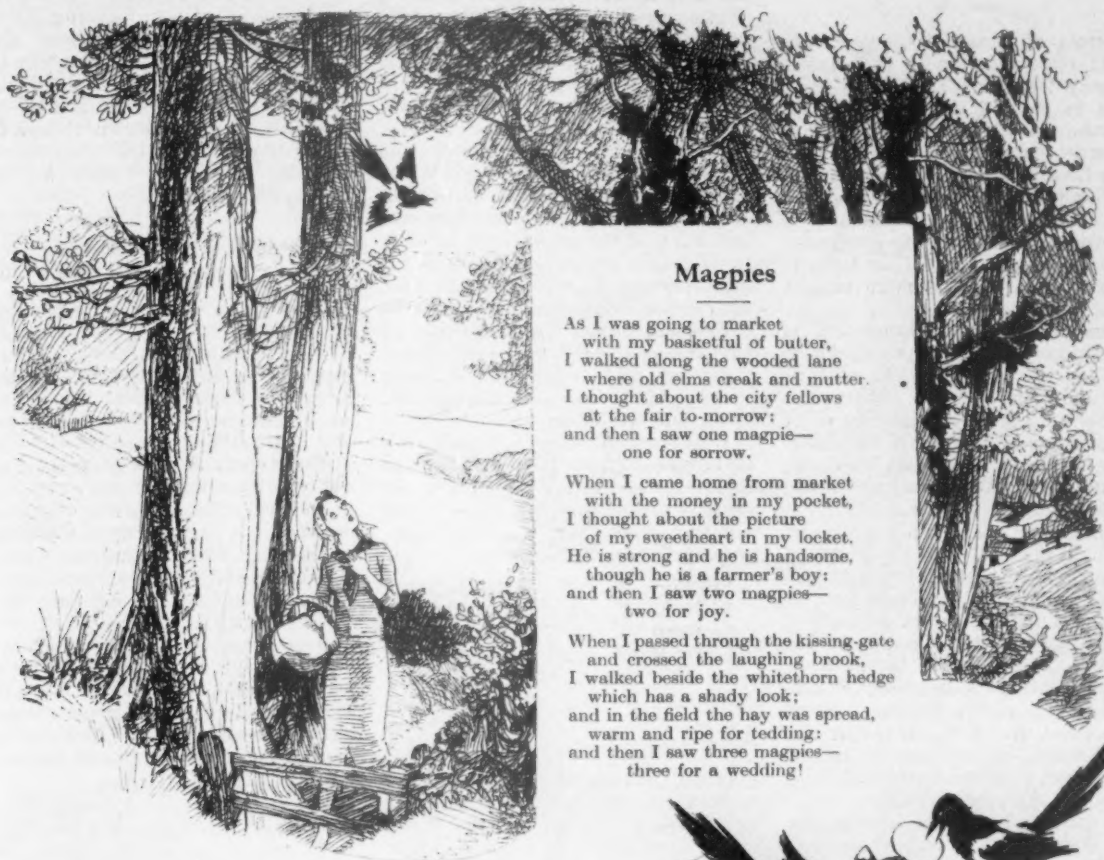
"If you please, direct me to the Swiss Cottage."

Anticlimax

"THE GREENOCK ACADEMY PRIZE LIST :

Holt Prize (English, Latin, French) ..	D. N. C. Gray.
Brown Prize (Classics) ..	D. N. C. Gray.
Stewart Dux Prize ..	D. N. C. Gray.
Menzies Prize (French) ..	D. N. C. Gray.
Campbell Prize (Mathematics) ..	D. N. C. Gray.
Rankin Prize (Spanish) ..	D. N. C. Gray.
Dan Kerr Prize (Science) ..	Robert A. M'Lellan."

Glasgow Herald.



Magpies

As I was going to market
with my basketful of butter,
I walked along the wooded lane
where old elms creak and mutter.
I thought about the city fellows
at the fair to-morrow:
and then I saw one magpie—
one for sorrow.

When I came home from market
with the money in my pocket,
I thought about the picture
of my sweetheart in my locket.
He is strong and he is handsome,
though he is a farmer's boy:
and then I saw two magpies—
two for joy.

When I passed through the kissing-gate
and crossed the laughing brook,
I walked beside the whitethorn hedge
which has a shady look;
and in the field the hay was spread,
warm and ripe for tedding:
and then I saw three magpies—
three for a wedding!



More About Minorities

AMONG diplomatic observers who are in close touch with the various Minority fronts no attempt is being made to conceal the view that the situation is not wholly free from obscurity and even gravity.

On Lord RUNCIMAN's patient efforts to discover who is ill-treating the Sudeten Germans, and in what way, it is considered premature to comment.

About the mission of Herr Haus to Great Britain a little more can be said.

Herr Haus, at the suggestion of Herr HITLER, with the approval of Herr Hess and the frank delight of Herr Hoss and Herr Horse, is visiting this country as a guest-mediator in order to suggest an adjustment of the differences between the English, the Scots, the Irish, the Welsh, and the many other suffering minorities.

Herr Haus has already seen the Welsh. He has also seen the Tower of London, the Science Museum, Greenwich Hospital and *Say When*.

He attended the recent Eisteddfod in disguise and left it in a stupor. He received an illuminated haggis from the Save Scotland Association, but this was returned with a tactful message to the effect that it was obviously undesirable for the mediator to accept gifts of food, however symbolical, from any of the suffering minorities.

No eatables have been sent to him from Wales. But it is believed that Herr Haus is particularly interested in

the sufferings of the Welsh. After escaping from the Eisteddfod the mediator spent a week-end in suffering Wales examining the conditions. He was struck, indeed shocked, by the discovery that on Sunday all the pubs in Wales are closed by law, while in England (and some parts of Scotland) they are open for a few hours. Herr Haus, perceiving here an obvious injustice which could rapidly be remedied, presented his famous Interim Report (C.O. 567891011) which recommended that the pubs should be open in Wales on Sundays. Much to his astonishment, he was informed that the existing arrangement was made at the request of the Welsh, and indeed that one of the few points of advantage and pride which the suffering Welsh could claim was the all-shutness of the pubs on Sunday.

Discouraged thus early in his search for significant facts, Herr Haus turned to the figures, which cannot lie. At the last census the population of the suffering minorities (considered geographically) was as follows:—

England	37,354,917
Wales	2,593,014
Scotland	4,842,554
Isle of Man	49,308
Jersey	50,462
Guernsey	42,743
Eire (1936)	2,965,854
Northern Ireland	1,279,753

(These figures, of course, take no account of the *secondary* suffering minorities, that is to say, the Welsh and Scots who live in England, where the pubs are open on Sundays, and the

English who are foolish enough to live in Wales, where they are not.)

One glance at these figures discovers numerous injustices. Suffering Eire is only a little more populous than suffering Wales. But suffering Eire has a Parliament of its own and suffering Wales has not. Suffering Ireland has two Parliaments of its own, though the entire population is less than that of suffering Scotland, which has no Parliament. Behold—

	Chaps	Parliaments
Suffering Ireland	4,245,607	2
" Scotland	4,842,554	0

It happens often that a stranger perceives the realities of a situation with a clearer eye than those who have grown up with it. One simple solution at once occurred to Herr Haus: *Take one Parliament away from Ireland and give it to Scotland.*

The details of this proposal have not yet been worked out; but it is understood that a strong staff of secretaries is engaged upon the task.

Suffering Wales, however, with a population of 2,593,014 would still have no Parliament, unlike suffering Man, with only 49,308.

Herr Haus, by the way, finds it a little difficult to understand why so many people should desire to have Parliaments. His own great country has dispensed with hers, and he has not met many Englishmen who seemed wholly content with theirs.

But there it is, the suffering Welsh would like to have a Parliament of their own in which to discuss and terminate their sufferings. True, they are represented in the British Parliament. They have 36 Members out of 615—or 3 in every 50; and since the suffering Welsh are about 3 in 40 of the total population that is fairly fair.

But in the British Parliament *they have to talk English*—which, as Herr Haus has discovered, is worse than Czech.

Herr Haus, then, we understand, has been toying with the notion that the suffering Welsh Members should be permitted to make their Parliamentary speeches in Welsh.

The Mediator is thorough. He invited a well-known speaker to relate to him the main sufferings of the Welsh, first in English and then in Welsh. Both he found moving, but the second version was the more enjoyable, for it reminded him of home. Further, the speaker, evidently, was more at home in her native tongue. What was politics became poetry; and that, thought the Mediator, must be a good thing.

The staff of secretaries, as usual, were set to the task of working out the



"TELL ME, DOCTOR, WHEN CAN I START NOT TAKING ENOUGH EXERCISE AGAIN?"

details of a scheme to remove this evident injustice.

Two unexpected difficulties at once presented themselves:—

(1) Technically there is no injustice. There is nothing to prevent the suffering Welsh Members from relating their sufferings in Parliament in Welsh—no statute, no Standing Order, nothing.

This was reported to Herr Haus, and he acutely said: "What then will happen if the Welsh deputy speaks so? No purge? No concentration camp? Nothing?"

"Everybody would go out," was the callous reply.

The brutality of it shocked Herr Haus; in his own great country few people are permitted to make speeches, but all are expected to listen to them.

He therefore proposed that the English Members should be compelled to listen to the Welsh speeches of the Welsh Members. But, while the details were being worked out,

(2) It was strongly represented that in that case the Scottish Members would insist on making their speeches in one or all of the numerous Scottish tongues. There are other "dialects" too which, so far from accepting the title of "corruptions," claim to be older and purer forms of language than the accepted literary English of Parliament, the Courts and the Press.

The present writer, when he took command of a platoon of gallant Tyne-siders in the Great War, found it difficult at first to understand anything they said, nor did they always clearly apprehend his meaning. And there were two members of the platoon (from Durham) who were not understood by anyone else.

Details of the Equitable Language Scheme are being worked out.

* * * * *

Then there is the question of language in the Courts. There is, as we have seen, no written rule that English only must be spoken in Parliament—indeed the KING himself uses Norman-French when he is giving the Royal Assent to Bills. But in 1731, on the ground that the lawyers used "a character (Latin) not legible to any but persons practising the law," it was enacted that "all proceedings whatsoever in any courts of justice . . . shall be in the English tongue only, and not in Latin or French, or in any other tongue or language whatsoever. . . ."

The Welsh have long accounted it a grievance that they must speak a difficult and alien tongue from the witness-box or (in rare cases) the dock;



"DON'T BE SO SUPERSTITIOUS, JANE. IT WAS NOTHING WHATEVER TO DO WITH MY WALKING UNDER THE LADDER."

and a deputation waited on Herr Haus yesterday with the text of a petition.

* * * * *

Then there are the grievances of the suffering English. These complain that the Scots, the Irish and the Welsh (a) cost far more than they are worth and are unable from their own resources to pay for themselves;

(b) Invade England in large numbers, secure the best jobs, and write offensive plays and books about the English;

(c) Introduce into England some wholly barbarous notions (e.g., the conduct of pubs on Sundays) and

openly advocate their adoption in England.

The Home Rule for England Movement is sending a deputation to Herr Haus to-morrow.

* * * * *

LATER.—Herr Haus has returned to Germany. Interviewed at Victoria Station he said, "It is too difficult. So many difficulties are here I do not understand how you can spare Lord RUNCIMAN to arrange Czecho-Slovakia. Nor do I know how for so long time so many sufferings have been suffered without mobilization. You are a great country."

A. P. H.



"I'M JUST SWEEPING THIS PUDDLE AWAY; IT WILL KEEP WANTING ME TO JUMP IN IT."

Rolling Up

ROLL up, roll up to our Church Fête.
Sixpence will get you through the gate,
Or, if you boggle at expense,
Sneak through our fence
And crawl
Into our rummage stall.
We can supply
An Old Etonian tie
Or backless gown
For threepence down,
With Mrs. Hepplewhite's stuffed duck
Flung in for luck.
Roll up, it's time you went
Into the tent
And saw
The one original great niece-in-law
Of Gipsy Lee,
Who for a modest fee
(In tones that to the life
Echo our postman's wife)
Repeats embarrassingly fast
Your past,
But is particularly dumb
About what is to come.

Roll up and win
A gilded safety-pin
For loosing a balloon
To Finchley or Rangoon,
Provided that the natives aren't too slack
To send it back.
Roll up your sleeve
And heave
A frenzied ball
Into the glass and china stall
In an attempt to uppercut
A coconut.
Roll up, but make no rash mistake;
It's Mrs. Brown's fruit-cake,
Not Mrs. Brown, whose weight
Is the keen subject of debate.
Roll up, or walk if you prefer;
Do not demur
About it being wet;
Try to forget
As best you can
That every honest Englishman
Hates
Fêtes.



AN INTERLUDE FOR DISCUSSION

Japan. "Yah! Pro-Chink!"
Russia. "Yah! Pro-Nazi!"



"No, no, BRUCE. LOOK—THIS WAY!"

The Remove Under Fire

THE youngsters had gone to bed. James lit his cigar and looked round at us thoughtfully.

"My youngest boy can say what he likes," he remarked, "but I *still* maintain that Harry Wharton and Co., of Greyfriars, should not have sneaked on Ponsonby of Highcliffe."

"You mean," said the Vicar, "that it was scarcely in keeping with his character as we have known it for twenty-five years?"

James nodded. "Precisely," he said gravely. "Had it been Billy Bunter, the fat Owl of the Remove—yes. Or Loder, the Bully of the Sixth—again yes, one might have expected it. But for Wharton and Co. to indulge in such tactics has caused me, I confess, the greatest surprise and uneasiness."

"Of course the Greyfriars men were in a very difficult position," said Terence mildly. "The situation was this," he continued, turning to the Doctor who had dropped in for a drink on his way home: "Wibley, the

brilliant boy impersonator, who has been ragged by the Remove, dresses up as Mossuo, the French master, and keeps them in on a half-hol. doing French verbs. An apple, however, flung by Vernon Smith, the Bounder, dislodges his wig, causing him to cry 'Wow! Oh, crumbs! Yaroo! My napper!'

"The Remove chase Wibley, who eventually hides in the grounds of the 'Three Fishers' pub, which is strictly out of bounds. Here he sees Ponsonby, of Highcliffe School, talking to a bookie. Although not interested in Pon's dingy blackguardism, he cannot help overhearing him making a bet.

"Ponsonby, on leaving, is chased by the Famous Five, and they are all copped by Mobby—Mr. Mobbs of Highcliffe. Later Ponsonby tells Mobby that the Greyfriars men were in the 'Three Fishers'—to disguise the fact that he was there himself.

"Mobby reports the Greyfriars men to their Head, Dr. Locke, and it is then that the Famous Five say that it was Ponsonby who was in the pub."

"Which they should *not* have done," declared James irritably. "To one

who has watched Wharton's character developing through a quarter of a century I can only repeat that it came as a distinct shock."

"Wharton undoubtedly should have contented himself with simply refuting the false charge," agreed the Vicar, "but you must remember that he did not actually *intend* to sneak. *The Magnet* reports the incident as follows," he continued, opening the magazine:—

"We'll admit a little more while we're about it!" roared Johnny Bull. "We saw Ponsonby there because he was sneaking out of the rotten den; and he's spun this yarn because he was afraid we might mention it."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

Mr. Quelch smiled—a grim smile.

"That's the truth, Sir," said Harry Wharton, speaking quietly. "That cur doesn't understand that a fellow wouldn't give him away, even if there was a row on. We never intended to mention it."

We sat in silence considering the position a while. There was no doubt that the Greyfriars men had been



"AH, BUT YOU'VE ONLY GOT TO FIGHT BATTLES. I HAVE TO PROVE YOU WON THEM."

greatly provoked by Pon's black-guardly action.

"Moreover," said Terence at last, "only a little while before they had been up before Quelch, charged with chasing Mossoo, though of course it was really Wibley. Loder, the Bully of the Sixth, had observed them while he was smoking a clandestine fag in the grounds, and reported them."

"But Mossoo's evidence completely cleared them, and Quelch called Loder a fool," declared James; "so that—"

"Nevertheless the incident may well have shaken their nerve a bit," observed the Doctor. "Doubtless they were not themselves. I clearly recall a very similar case reported in *The Schoolgirls' Own* some years ago. Betty Barton had been—"

"When I was a boy," interrupted James doggedly, "Harry Wharton never sneaked. I am sorry he has started now."

"What did Wibley do?" asked the Doctor. "It was all his fault."

Terence brightened. "I am happy to say that Wibley revenged the Greyfriars men for Ponsonby's rotten action. He learnt that Pon's horse had lost—and he knew that Pon couldn't pay. So he dressed up as a bookie and burst

into Ponsonby's study at Highcliffe demanding the money. Ponsonby, who was smoking and playing cards with his shady pals, turned as white as a sheet. And Wibbers punched him on the snoot. Then Mobbs came along and—"

"Did he get away?" asked the Doctor anxiously.

"Oh, he got away all right in the end."

"But what a jape!" breathed the Vicar, beaming reminiscently.

"It was certainly a jape—and a very good jape indeed," conceded James, "but I still maintain that Wharton should *not* have sneaked on Pon."

Sad Death of a Railway

I MOUEN a railway.

It was much the nicest I have ever taken ticket in, as well as the noisiest, the smelliest and the slowest. There was more character in one blast of its guards' trumpets than all the grown-up railways can muster between them.

Its engines, fierce untameable little creatures of the wild, had personalities beside which the Royal Scot would

have seemed a thing of paper; with gaps of a few miles here and there the trains roared and clanged and snorted right round the coast of Brittany. For many English tourists, including myself years ago, it has changed a walking-tour from torture into unqualified delight. And now it is dead or dying, killed by the upstart motor-bus.

It was everything that it should have been. All the vices of big railways were so magnified in it that they blossomed out as humours fresh and acceptable. You could hear it coming for miles. It ran sociably along the side of the road, beating up the good dust of France like a plough, and at the least suspicion of danger, if a bend in the road came in sight or a cow put her head suddenly over a gate, the driver set in motion a large brass bell, which had a friendly arrangement with the pistons, so that progress uphill sounded like a funeral and progress downhill like a wedding. Owing to a whim of the designer's, never fully forgiven by the personnel, the bell was far easier to start than to stop and was therefore in gear most of the time; it acted as a kind of psychological metronome on the spirits of the passengers. While the train ran along a level road

these were normal, conversation being light and open as it would be in any buvette or public space; when it went uphill and the bell slowed with every clang, speech dried up into a decent silence, hands were folded and faces took on a certain awe; but once the crest was reached and the train began to run down the other side the crazy pealing produced an effect on those behind it that was little short of drunkenness. Grandmothers burst into guffaws, big men in black velvet slapped each others' knees, and even the chickens, who travelled in very third-class baskets under the seats, forgot their burden of complaint against the company and came out cheerfully with a yolk-song of their own.

Ah, it was a railway!

In speed it was exactly right. Those of the passengers with voices strong enough to rise above the din were able to conclude discussions on the major topics of the day with cyclists going in the same direction before a down-grade carried the swifter machines out of ear-shot. In the case of pedestrians, the interchange of ideas had to be compressed, but in the circumstances nobody could grumble. Nobody who

used the line ever thought of grumbling, which was the best evidence of its appeal. There was a magic about the whole system which ruled out anything like that.

In summer the guards wore satchels and very wide-brimmed straw hats and looked like high-school girls except that they also wore brown canvas trousers and were generally smoking very black tobacco. As a corps of men they compelled immediate respect. In small talk they were brilliant, and the verbal torrent with which on occasion they could clear the track of sheep or picnickers was something never likely to be forgotten by the offending parties. Above all they had breadth of mind, and saw nothing but sense in a passenger sitting outside in front of the engine, where he got the best of the view and missed the worst of the dense cloud of black grit which fell like a pall over the rear carriages.

The drivers dressed in such voluminous overalls of light blue that they were not unlike Edwardian bathing-belles from a chorus which had put the wrong grease-paint on their faces. They also were splendid people. Now and then an engine fell sick, a victim

either to an ugly form of bronchial asthma which was a painful thing to hear and could only be cured by a severe operation which let out all the steam, or to a simpler disease which the driver, after taking his patient's temperature and feeling all its pulses, was reluctantly bound to diagnose as lack of pressure in the boiler. This could only mean that he had been carrying on too long a conversation with someone on the road to remember the odd shovelful of briquettes which the furnace modestly demanded, but it was in the spirit of the line that while the engine slowly grew hot again all the passengers should get out and cluster round it, commenting sympathetically on the wretched quality of modern fuel.

But now most of this railway is dead. Yellow motor-buses with vulgar voices have telescoped its time-table and conspicuously failed to reproduce its charms. Where the brave little engines have gone I cannot discover. In the mystery which surrounds their last resting-place there is a suggestion that, as elephants are said to do, they have rumbled off by themselves to some secret corner to die like gentlemen.

ERIC.



"RAGIN"? CERTAINLY NOT. IT AIN'T IN ACCORD WITH THE COMPANY'S POLICY."

The General Meeting

LDLY I made a mental note of the minutes:—

"The First General Meeting of the Five Mile Cottage Tea-Rooms Company Limited was held at the Registered Offices of the Company, Five Mile Cottage, Pettinger Hammer, Sussex, on 11th August, 1938. Present, Both Shareholders. In attendance, Mr. Adams (Accountant), Semper Infidelis (Cat), and, intermittently, Millicent (Waitress)."

"Do you take sugar, Mr. Adams?" said my wife (the other shareholder).

Mr. Adams, striving to look dignified in a deck-chair, said that he did, and carefully placed his papers on the ground. Semper, who has a curious disposition, joined Mr. Adams and rubbed his head gently round his ankle.

Mr. Adams cleared his throat.

"And now," he said, "to business. The first item on the agenda is the appointment of directors. Might I have one more lump of sugar, if you please? Let me see. What do the Articles of Association say about directors?"

He fumbled in his bag while my wife tactfully talked about roses, the drought, and was it really worth while to send all those men over from Australia just to play cricket.

I proceeded with my minutes.

"After the tea interval," I recorded, "Mr. Adams made a statement of policy on the recent Test Match and it was Resolved that the two signatories to the Memorandum of Association be appointed directors, and that Mr. Bradman

would not play so well on a natural wicket."

"And now—ah—the Bank. I have here—" He was wrong. Semper seemed to approve of Mr. Adams and leapt gracefully on to his knee, dislodging the bag. What is more, he contrived to stay there while Mr. Adams groped for the bag, and, as a result, for his glasses.

"Ah, yes. The resolution appointing bankers. It is very long and perhaps I need not read it at all. I assume both directors will sign cheques?"

The two directors looked at each other.

My wife is a woman of character and independence. The Tea Rooms are her sacred personal possession.

"But why?" she said. "The business is mine and I have always signed the cheques before. Why do we want two signatures now?"

Mr. Adams did very well. I quite thought that he had succeeded in explaining what a limited company was; for a second it was all clear in my mind—

"The usual resolution appointing Bankers was passed, neither director having read it or felt it was necessary."

"And now," said Mr. Adams, "we have—ah—the sale agreements the solicitors have prepared. I will read them out."

He did so.

When he finished my wife smiled sweetly.

"What does it all mean, Mr. Adams?"

Mr. Adams stirred uneasily and Semper pushed him firmly back in his deck-chair. Semper was immensely interested in his watch-chain and fob.

"Well, you see," said Mr. Adams,

with less than his usual confidence, "you are selling your business—"

"Not really selling it, Mr. Adams. I'm just forming it into a Company, am I not?"

"Oh, yes, quite. But it is really the same thing, for the Company being a separate legal entity—"

"What is that?"

Mr. Adams laughed uneasily.

"My dear lady, you reach the core of the whole matter. I might describe it as a species of individual, separate from you—"

"But I own the business and all the shares in the Company, don't I?"

"Yes, quite. But there must still be an agreement so that the Company may have what you have now—"

"But doesn't it all mean expense?"

"A few guineas or so and—ah—the stamp duty."

The words "stamp duty" seemed to disturb Semper, for he rose and stretched himself magnificently, anchoring his forepaws in Mr. Adams' waistcoat, and, I think, chest, for Mr. Adams sat up and protested.

My wife ignored all this.

"Stamp duty? Really, Mr. Adams, this is very surprising. I have already paid a lot of money to the solicitors and now you talk of wasting stamp duties on agreements between me and myself. It's very far from clear."

At that moment Millicent appeared.

"Please, Mum," she said, "there's a couple asking for 'oney in the comb. I don't know of no combs with 'oney in 'em 'ere. What shall I say to 'em?"

Millicent is, I think, very temporary and comes from Brixton. My wife sighed and disappeared.

Meanwhile Semper was making valiant attempts to regain his place on Mr. Adams' knee, this time apparently under the illusion that it was necessary to haul himself up by the claws. Mr. Adams had clearly changed his mind about cats.

My wife reappeared.

"And now, Mr. Adams, you shall tell me all about why all this is really necessary."

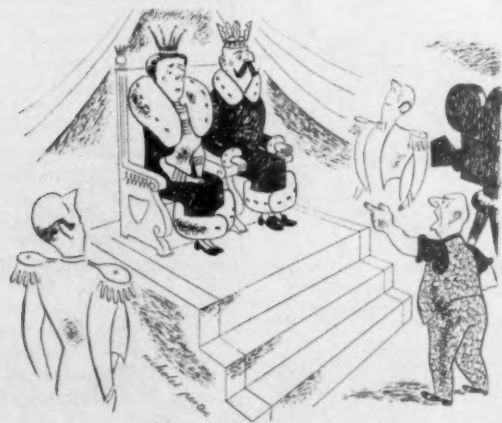
At this point Semper regained the knee and dislodged the bag again. A piece of paper fluttered out and Semper, pretending he was once more a kitten, sprang at it. He is inclined to be vain. The afternoon breeze helped him with it along the garden path.

Mr. Adams leaped to his feet.

"Stop him!" he said. "He's got the Certificate of Incorporation."

I concluded my minutes.

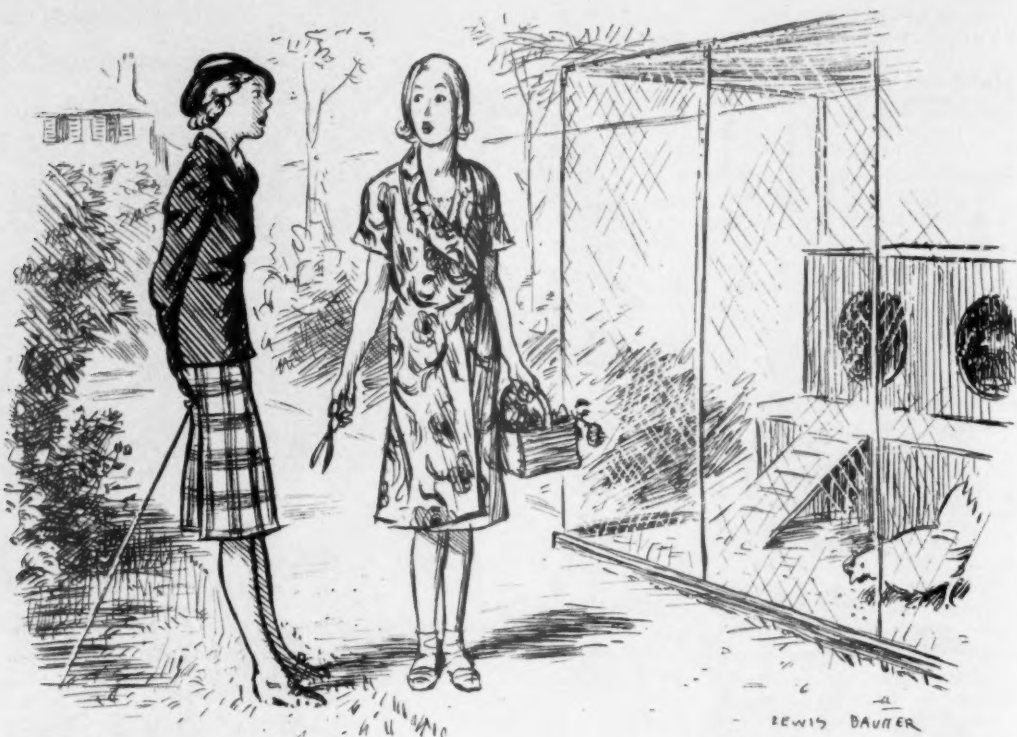
"At this point the meeting adjourned in the Orchard pending (a) the recovery of the Certificate of Incorporation and (b) a convenient new date being fixed by Mr. Adams at his office."



"YOU'RE BOTH FIRED!"



A VISIT TO STRATFORD-ON-AVON FOR A MATINEE PERFORMANCE



"AND WHAT WILL YOU FEED THE CHICKS ON?"
 "OH, BUT THEY'LL HAVE THEIR MOTHER!"

The Reason Why

AUNT Emma is looking for a kitchen-maid.

Poor Cousin Florence is looking for a kitchen-maid, a cook, and a housemaid.

Old Lady Flagge is looking for a cook.

Mrs. Battlegate is looking for a cook.

The Rector's cousin's niece is looking for a cook, and, although she lives far, far away, near Scarborough, she is looking in this neighbourhood—*via* the Rectory—as well as in Derbyshire, Cornwall, Northern Ireland and the Outer Hebrides.

This, you say to yourself as you read, is simply a new and more realistic Ollendorf, featuring Life in the Raw, instead of in Fancy's Realm—(gardeners' hats, pens belonging to the good scholar, and so on.)

But no, Ollendorf has nothing to do with it.

One has simply put the facts on to paper.

Aunt Emma is looking for a kitchen-maid . . . and so on.

A fortnight ago the position was rather different. Poor Cousin Florence, old Lady Flagge and Mrs. Battlegate were all as described above. The Rector's cousin's niece was said to be in correspondence with a temporary from South Wales.

And Aunt Emma *had found a kitchen-maid*.

"But Aunt Emma," one remembers hearing Laura say to her—"but Aunt Emma, *how* did you find one? Everybody says they don't exist any more."

"I know they don't, dear. That's why it's so wonderful."

"Which Registry Office was it?" said Mrs. Battlegate, rapidly putting on her hat as she spoke and evidently ready to spring into the car at a moment's notice.

"It was in answer to an advertisement," Aunt Emma replied modestly.

Mrs. Battlegate took off her hat and went straight to the writing-desk.

"She comes from a dear little village called Cranniton Fitzgeorge and Upper Poppington," happily pursued Aunt Emma, who had described the dear little village to me in quite different

terms when we were spending the morning looking for it up hill and down dale, on receipt of the girl's letter.

"And you actually persuaded her—"

"She's in the kitchen at this moment," said Aunt Emma. "Of course I don't say she's experienced, because she isn't. But she's been out before, and worked under a good cook, and she's willing to be told."

"It sounds too good to be true," moaned poor Miss Flagge.

Aunt Emma, one couldn't help feeling, rather lost her head at this stage.

"She doesn't mind the country a bit, and she's got quite a good reference, and the cook likes her, and she's such a nice girl," she cried blithely.

I saw at once that Aunt Emma's old and valued friendship with Mrs. Battlegate had that moment come to an end, and that her pleasant and cordial relationship with the Flagges was already a thing of the past.

The Rector, probably in virtue of his office and of the comparatively vicarious nature of his quest for a cook, bore the thing better, but even he remarked rather curtly that he only

hoped the girl wouldn't leave within a week.

(The thought flashed through my mind that if she did, it would be a close thing between Mrs. Battlegate, old Lady Flagge and Cousin Florence as to which of them got hold of her first.)

"I made everything quite clear to her when I engaged her, and she agreed to everything," Aunt Emma continued recklessly. "Of course I don't expect her to stay for ever, but even a few months would be something."

Nobody made very much response to this—unless one counts the peculiar sound that broke from Mrs. Battlegate, like a sort of dreadful laugh—and one realised that the best thing to do was to break up the party.

Afterwards, Aunt Emma said very earnestly—

"But really I think I *did* think of everything, and she seems quite ready to settle down. I do believe in telling them everything right from the very beginning, and then sticking to it. That's the *whole* secret."

But it wasn't.

"But Aunt Emma, if she likes the cook, and the cook likes her, and she

doesn't mind the country, and is willing to learn, *why* is she leaving so soon?" one asked a week later.

"Because," Aunt Emma replied, "she says she doesn't want to work in the kitchen."

One always likes to get at the real reason, even if it does seem rather late in the day to have mentioned it.

E. M. D.

The Dizzy Bean

("Cocoa fluctuated mildly."—*Market Report*)

WHEN the ladies of Newton and Girnham

Indulge in a seasonal spree,

No help alcoholic

Enlivens their frolic

(Or so it's reported to me);

But in festal array you'd discern 'em,

If you witnessed that decorous scene,

Quaffing can upon can

Of a wholesome ptisan

Made from Cocoa's exemplary bean.

The friend of the nursery table,

The foe of despair and fatigue,

Beloved of all liquors

By curates and vicars,

The drink of the Purity League.

In ballad renowned and in fable,

In palace and woodcutter's hut,

From Greenland to Moko

The virtues of Cocoa

Are known to the veriest mutt.

But hark! A malevolent rumour

Has begotten the Demon of Doubt,

And Cocoa, the staid

And respectable maid,

Is said to be swaying about.

She's evincing a wandering humour

(So the scandalous gossips disclose).

While a strong inclination

To mild fluctuation

Disturbs her Victorian pose.

Then bury the shattered illusion!

Wrap it up in your stockings of blue!

Pour squashes like rain

Down the principal drain

And rejoice with the Bacchanal crew.

Bring the juice of the vine in profusion.

Bring whisky—black, dappled or

white!

Sing "Callay!" and "Calloo!"

Let's all fluctuate too,

For Cocoa has gone on the skite—

Whoopee!—

For Cocoa has gone on the skite!



"DON'T STOP STIRRING, DADDY."

An Odyssey Recalled

THE frontispiece shows a youth of sixteen or so, with widely-spaced eyes, a delicate sensuous mouth and a dirty collar. The face is strikingly full of character for its age; the distant gaze in the eyes reveals the dreamer, and the small hole in the shirt just to the left of the tie reveals the early independence of maternal control. In a short preface, the late Sir JOSEPH AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, a Member of His Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, a Member of Parliament, &c., &c., &c., affirms his unshakable confidence in the romantic boy whose personality is stamped all over the subsequent pages, even to the extent of adding a personal recommendation that he should be allowed to pass freely without let or hindrance and receive every assistance and protection of which he might stand in need. It is a fitting tribute from a great old man to a great young one.

The young man—but we may as well have it in the first person singular; it's my passport we're talking about—I, then, seem to have been a person of boundless ambition in those days. My preparations were all made for voyages

into the British Empire (see Regulations 6 and 7) and all countries in Europe, including the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Turkey. How far these high ambitions were realised can be gauged from what comes afterwards.

The first landmark is the quaint old Breton port of Saint-Malo. So touched were the authorities by the courage of the young Englishman who had set out alone to visit their shores that the mayor or the harbour-master or someone formed a special committee to welcome me off the boat, and again later to see me on it. This act of simple kindness is commemorated on page seven in the few simple direct words: "Commissariat Spécial de Saint-Malo. 11 Août 1929. Débarquement"; and then, farther down the page: "Commissariat Spécial de Saint-Malo. 28 Août 1929. Embarquement." But what a world of adventure is contained between those twin placid records of arrival and departure! What excursions to Dinard! What journeys up the Rance by *vedette*! What gazing at stained glass in the great church at Dol! What omelettes at Mère Poulard's at Mont Saint-Michel! If reticence is a virtue in literature, as the present fashion decrees, then here is one of the greatest masterpieces of style yet produced by the twentieth century.

We hear nothing more of my travels,

owing to the thoughtless attitude of the Belgians in taking their visitors on trust and leaving their passports unmarked, until February 1936, when there suddenly appears an entry of remarkable significance. This is nothing less than a police landing permit issued at Suez and endorsed with three of the loveliest stamps I have ever seen, worth two hundred, one hundred, and fifty mills respectively. The permit is terse and to the point, and reads as follows: "Permitted to land in Egypt for a maximum period of 72 hours on 28 Fév. 1936 and to rejoin the same ship at P. Said or Alexandria. Suez Port Control." Below is added in pencil the note: "s.s. *Durham Castle*."

Any number of theories may be advanced to explain how I fell into the hands of the police at this time. It will be recalled that Egypt in February 1936 was in a state of considerable political tension; a little elementary research will reveal that I had left Zanzibar exactly a fortnight previously, just a week after the serious native riots (though a little more research will show that I only stayed in that picturesque island for two hours and a half); my previous brushes with the authorities, on Boat-Race Night, 1934, and Boat-Race Night, 1933, will be remembered and conclusions drawn to throw some light on this remarkable affair. But the fact is that there are circumstances leading up to the Egyptian expedition which are completely ignored in the official pages of my passport.

At that time I was travelling up and down (or rather round) the coast of Africa looking for local colour; and it is an open secret that I was very much under the influence of a Mrs. Chatterbury, who was travelling on the same ship. One evening, as we watched the sun set in a blaze of scarlet-and-orange over the humid waters of the Red Sea, Mrs. Chatterbury confessed to me that she was anxious to see the Pyramids by moonlight.

"Mrs. Chatterbury," I exclaimed, "you shall!"

There followed days of anxious cabling and consulting with the purser, and finally it was arranged that Mrs. Chatterbury and I, in company with some two dozen other passengers, should leave the ship at Suez and make the long and arduous journey through the Nubian Desert to Cairo in cars provided by Thos. Cook and Son. So we did. That is all there is about it. We had to have a police permit before we could go ashore.

Shall I ever forget the romance of those seventy-two golden hours?—the long trek over the burning sands of Giza to where the Pyramids and the



"WE THOUGHT IT WOULD BE SO NICE TO ASK ONLY REAL GARDEN-LOVERS."



"I HEAR THAT YOU TAXI-DRIVERS NEVER HAVE CHANGE, SO HERE'S YOUR NINEPENCE ALL IN COPPERS."

Sphinx still stand inviolate in their desert solitude; the picturesque cries of the *muezzin* and the *bakshish*; the cool drinks on the terrace of Shepheard's, where it is said that if you sit long enough you are certain to meet a friend. Neither Mrs. Chatterbury nor I sat long enough; we only met a dragoman.

There is less reticence about my expedition into Germany in the autumn of the same year. It is punctuated at every turning with dignified official observations like "Grenzbescheinigung erteilt" and "Rm. 50 aus Register-

guthaben gezahlt." The Wechselstube at Hamburg-Hptbhf. vies with the Wechselstube at Berlin Frd. and the Wechselstube at München-Hbf. in leaving me a pleasant *Denkmal* of my visit there. Contrariwise, my visit to the Paris Exhibition, apart from the courtly behaviour of the town of Dieppe in convening a "Commissariat Spécial" such as greeted me at Saint-Malo eight years before, left no lasting mark.

And now, alas! all these wonderful memories must be thrown into the melting-pot, for my passport is ten

years old and I must have another one. I wonder if they will let me cut my picture out of the old one before I return it? That eager young face seems the most appropriate souvenir of a document with whose aid I have drunk coarse red wine at Tenerife, and fallen into the sea at Lobito Bay, and climbed Table Mountain, and drunk coarse red wine at Lourenço Marques, and been to the pictures at Marseilles, and drunk coarse red wine at Beira, and ridden to the Pyramids on a camel called Mary Anderson. I would not like to forget it altogether.



"EVERY TIME I TRY TO WORK OUT THE WAITER'S TEN-PER-CENT. TIP I GET A RECURRING DECIMAL."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Case for Mohammed

ONE welcomes a well-informed biography of *Mohammed* (COBDEN-SANDERSON, 8/6) if only because the solution of Moslem world-problems is not exactly served by the ribald memories of GIBBON which constitute perhaps the commonest English reaction to the name of the prophet. Mr. HELMUT RIPPERGER's translation of ESSAD BEY's book presents us not only with the views of a believer on the greatest of practical theocracies but with a vivid account of the career and character of its founder, the material on which he worked and the give-and-take between the exigencies of inspiration and the demands of aggressive expansion. From this last point of view the life presents appreciable parallels with the lives of other dictators—even to the vindictive persecution of poets who would not or could not take the great man seriously. On the other hand the regeneration which MOHAMMED claimed to initiate—he was not sent to reveal a new religion but to restore a primitive one—was in many respects an impressive reality; and a notable sense of social justice was exhibited by the strange being who maintained that "scents, women and, above all else, prayer are the most beautiful things on this earth."

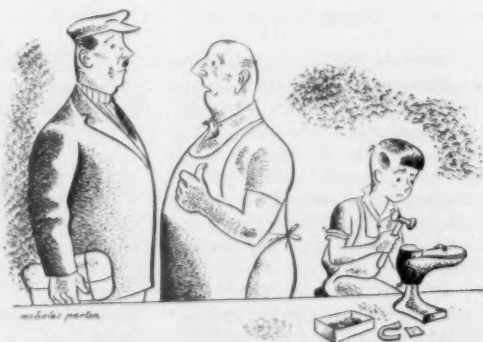
A Penny for Their Thoughts

Taking an unusually light-hearted header into the subconscious, M. ANDRÉ MAUROIS has founded a pleasantly

ironical novel on the invention of a psychograph. This, more colloquially known as *The Thought-Reading Machine* (CAPE, 5/-), is exhibited to Denis Dumoulin, a French professor lecturing at an American university, by its inventor, an English colleague. You set it, discreetly camouflaged, near its victim and it produces a sort of gramophone record of the victim's unspoken thoughts. *Dumoulin*, who has accepted his Transatlantic job largely to retrieve his wife from a too possessive family circle in Normandy, borrows the psychograph to try on his tiresome and retaliatory *Suzanne*. The first consequences of this experiment are not happy: the more so as *Suzanne*, apprised of the violation of her own mental privacy, turns the psychograph—and the tables—on her husband. Companies, American and French, spring up to exploit the machine; but the boom ends in the psychograph's final discredit. After all, its revelations of reverie are not very important. Character is a matter of choice and action, and "interior language is no more authentic than ordinary speech; the latter is a protection against others and the former against ourselves."

Lengthy Promenade

The clever lady who writes under the name of G. B. LANCASTER assuredly does not lack courage. She has taken the biggest canvas she could find, and if towards the end of her novel—*Promenade* (JOHN LANE, 8/6)—even the most determined reader gets a trifle confused by the increasing crowd of characters, he will not fail to admire the zest with which they are handled, down to the third and fourth generation. For in this book we have practically the whole history of New Zealand as a colony, dating from the arrival of H.M.S. *Herald* in 1840 and the reading of the Proclamation of Annexation by her commander, down to the time, some seventy years later, when the grandchildren of some of our characters, English and Maori, were sailing for Europe to take part in the War. And the author certainly knows her subject. She confesses to having a plethora of material, drawn from family records and diaries, and admits that none of her characters is entirely mythical. So perhaps some earnest searchers may discover the originals of the *Lovel* family, who left their county seat in England to repair their fortunes in the Antipodes soon after the accession of VICTORIA—*Peregrine*, that incarnation of the stiff prig, who remained *Mr. Lovel* to his charming but too submissive wife even after his succession to the title, with *Sir John* and *Caroline* and *Darien* and all the rest of the



"I'M AFRAID 'IS 'EART AIN'T IN 'IS BOOTS."

clan. They lived through stirring times, and their story is full of historical information and crammed with incident. But the reader must be in the best of condition to get to the end without lagging.

Two Women

Told as a personal narration,
Rebecca (from GOLLANCZ) displays
 Amazing power of penetration
 Into the maze of female ways,
 Subtly and candidly revealing
 One woman with a heart and one
 Of fascinating charm concealing
 The fact that she possesses none.

Of these two wives, one dead, one
 reigning,

DAPHNE DU MAURIER deftly tells
 The living lady's thoughts, maintaining
 A depth of interest which impels
 The eager reader, thrilled, excited,
 To read each word that she has writ,
 And so to close the book, delighted,
 Yet grieved that there's no more
 of it.

Fish Extraordinary

Since M. MICHEL BOUZY, inspired by the late M. EMILE PRUNIER, published the French original of *Madame Prunier's Fish Cookery Book* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 6/-) in 1929, France has taken up the cooking of fish with enthusiasm. You can not only find out-of-the-way recipes for fresh fish and salt in every "regional" book you pick up, but the whole art and science of fish cookery in a small three-franc volume published as propaganda by a committee of ardent fish-consumers at Boulogne. All this, however, is in French, a stumbling-block to many English mistresses and most English cooks; and these—together with gourmets who desire the last epicurean word in the kitchen—have to thank Mr. AMBROSE HEATH for translating with such care, animation and lucidity Mme. PRUNIER's thousand recipes for *Poissons, Coquillages et Crustacés*. One cherishes a furtive hope that no fellow-countryman will "cut a live lobster in half lengthways" (the very un-American prelude to *Homard Vanderbilt*) or try to stun a trout before simmering it alive in *Court-bouillon*. There is legitimate pleasure enough and to spare: see particularly the hot *hors-d'œuvres* that do duty, if necessary, as "savouries."

Selling the Pass

It may be a long time since any of us were admonished to set a good example; but the unpleasant consequences of setting a bad one still remain, and *Journeying Wave* (MAC-



A HAPPY RELEASE.

Kind Friend. "PARDON ME, BUT I OUGHT TO TELL YOU THAT JONES HAS RUN AWAY WITH YOUR WIFE."

Husband (bored). "BUT WHY RUN?"

Tom Browne, August 23rd, 1905.

MILLAN, 7/6) shows how far they may extend. They extend perhaps a little too far, for there is no limit to the moral dislocation caused by the contemplated divorce of *Humphrey* and *Viola Lessington*. The infidelity of the one and the vindictiveness of the other were bound to upset the balance of their decent provincial circle; but one doubts whether the other people affected would have been so ready with their dissolute response. A hitherto chaste niece accedes to the dishonourable overtures of her employer; another allows her mother to jockey her into accepting a moneyed wastrel;

while the heroine's middle-aged sister, by way of securing her share of what romance is going, jettisons her country home for London and an obvious adventurer. Miss RICHMAL CROMPTON undoubtedly knows her world; but a lighter touch, a less resolute underlining of cause and effect, and a little more restraint in depicting the lapses of the lapsed would surely have resulted in a more enjoyable tragi-comedy.

When She Was Very Young

Someone—perhaps, since she edits it, Lady OXFORD AND ASQUITH—had the good idea of collecting from fifteen of our best-known women the histories of their youth and publishing them in *Myself When Young* (MULLER, 12/6). An extremely interesting, even moving, book they make, the different characters of the writers, their different circumstances and ambitions giving it a rich variety. There are authors, a doctor, actresses, politicians (the contributions of Miss SYLVIA PANKHURST and Miss ELLEN WILKINSON are both of the most absorbing interest), great ladies, an airwoman (Miss AMY JOHNSON, writing exceedingly well), preachers and teachers. The book leaves the reader proud of his country, its women and, what seems to be more uncommon, his contemporaries. One point of resemblance between these varied papers is the number of loving and grateful references to a writer's mother; another, the deep interest shown by many in religion.

The Promised Land

In Palestine to-day there are some fifteen to twenty thousand men and women who have set themselves deliberately to become a peasantry bound to the soil in order that they may rebuild on sure foundations the historic homeland of the Jews. Many of them have surrendered wealth or position to the enterprise and many bring high scholastic attainment. The land on which they are settled in scattered communities was shrivelled desert or malarial swamp, and they have dug their wells or laid their drainage-lines often under fire, always under threat of Bedouin raids. In these settlements, fascinatingly if perhaps a little inadequately described in Mr. MAURICE PEARLMAN's *Collective Adventure* (HEINEMANN, 10/6), there is no social discrimination, no individual property (beyond a tooth-brush or so) and no sex inequality, while all unpleasant tasks are shared in rotation. Milking the cow was done by all in turn until the cow rebelled. The author says almost nothing of the relation of the communities to the British mandatory power and gives no hint as to how far they might be expected to sustain existence were there no outside and, incidentally, capitalist organised world to support them, but he does persuade one of the sincerity and even heroism implied in this most fundamental of sociological experiments.

A Lear Omnibus

"The best of LEAR in one handy volume"—there will be objections no doubt to this description of *The Lear Omnibus* (NELSON, 3/6), objections of that extreme bitterness so easy to arouse among enthusiasts for any writer whose readers take a proprietary interest in him; but the phrase is very probably justified. Here are *The Pobble Who Has No Toes*, the *Yonghy-Bonghy-Bó*, the *Quangle Wangle*, the *Dong* with a Luminous Nose, the *Owl* and the *Pussy-Cat*, Mr. and Mrs. *Discobolus*, the *Akond of Swat* and many other famous characters, not counting the twenty-four or so in the carefully-illustrated *Alphabet* and the dozens in the *Limericks*, which fill up every spare page between the longer works. On nearly every page is one of LEAR's drawings. The enthusiasts will of course buy this book, for even those who disapprove will want to know precisely what to grumble about; but there are few readers, informed or not, that it would fail to interest and amuse.

Giddy Heights

Even if *Sinister Crag* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) does not escape the criticism of expert climbers it will surely be welcomed by those who prefer their novels of murder and mystery to be placed in a mountainous and original setting. So vividly, however, does Mr. NEWTON GAYLE describe some of the more hazardous incidents that those who suffer from vertigo if they leave the solid earth are advised to go elsewhere for their holiday reading. Mr. GAYLE, in an author's note, apologises for the "outrageous liberties" he has taken with the geography of the Lake District, but he can rest assured that other

novelists have taken greater geographical liberties and got away with them. The investigator, *James Greer*, becomes more and more mellow with age, and if he would refrain from so many "old mans" and "old boys" he would be a thoroughly agreeable solver of problems.

Sound and Sensible

The long-short stories that G. D. H. and M. COLE have included in *Mrs. Warrender's Profession* (COLLINS, 7/6) provide their readers with a most pleasant portrait of a clever old lady. In his mother's opinion *James Warrender*, "the well-known detective," knew far more about criminals than about ordinary people. So, in helping to provide a solution to various problems, she from her experience of everyday folk went to work in a quiet and observant way that yielded wonderful results. But her son was as slow in recognising her value as he was quick to appreciate his own. These stories, which are easy to read, might have been arranged with better effect, for in each of the first two a hypodermic syringe is of considerable importance.



"POOR, SIR, YOU SHOULD HAVE FELT JESSOP."

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Charivaria

THERMOMETERS are now used by up-to-date restaurant chefs to test soup temperatures. This does away with the old rule-of-thumb method employed by waiters.

★ ★ ★

"AIR EXPANSION CAUSES SKY CONGESTION."

"Daily Telegraph" heading.

How dangerous these heat-waves are!

★ ★ ★

A Glasgow man reputed to have a louder voice than any other football spectator in the North is to settle in London. The amount of the transfer fee is not disclosed.

★ ★ ★

"It isn't my fault that I have got into debt," exclaimed a man in a recent court case. Of course not. It was all owing to other people.



★ ★ ★

"Among the frogs," we read, "it is the female which does the wooing." With these creatures naturally every year is leap year.

★ ★ ★

A recent statement that burglars gain easy entrance into the new villas that are built mainly of glass bears out the con-

tention that people who live in glass houses shouldn't.

★ ★ ★

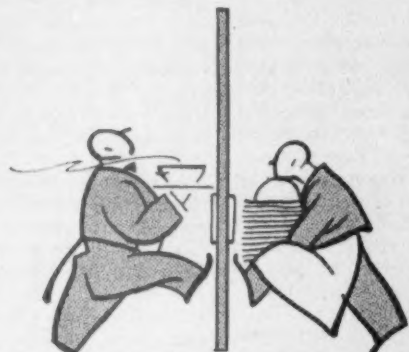
Cri de Council

"The Clerk (Mr. E. H. Carver) reported that a letter came from the Norfolk County Council making weeping statements on the administration by Rural District Councils of the Milk Designations Order."

East Anglian Paper.

★ ★ ★

"Who will follow Greta Garbo?" asks a film critic. Reporters, we suppose, as usual.



An English matador recently on holiday in this country says that fighting a bull is nervous work for the beginner, but that one soon gets in the way of it. Just what we should have feared.

★ ★ ★

"DOVE'S BOLD BID FOR 100-METRES SWIMMING TITLE AT WEMBLEY."

Heading in "Daily Mail."

Coo!

★ ★ ★

It appears that fewer women will attempt to swim the Channel this year. Perhaps the pastime

★ ★ ★

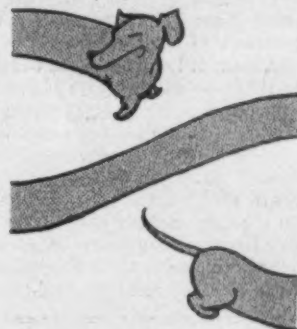
"I am definitely in favour of getting rid of coinage," states a currency reformer. So evidently he hasn't yet visited the slot-machines on the pier.

★ ★ ★

A breeder thinks that the end of the dachshund is in sight. Or at least just round the corner.

★ ★ ★

An African native aged a hundred-and-forty has been interviewed by a newspaper reporter. The veteran had some rather crushing things to say about the modern centenarian.



★ ★ ★

Travel by Rail

"To attain economic freedom the Turkish state has made great sacrifices, but its policy of building railways out of revenue, for instance, has been fully justified by the military and economic benefits which have followed in its train."—The Times.

★ ★ ★

"Some people," says a writer, "always seem able to tell what is coming next in a film." And they usually do.



Lives of the Stamp-Collectors

Count Leo Tolstoy

THE snow lay twelve feet deep along the Nevsky Prospekt the day that Leo Tolstoy was born. But Petersburg went about its daily occupations as though nothing had happened. Nothing had happened—yet. And in any case Tolstoy was not born in Petersburg at all but in Kazan, then the seat of a great university and the centre of all the newest movements in art, religion, politics and confectionery. Turgenev was there, smoking his pipe in all weathers, fishing for eels in the frozen Volga, and laying the foundations of the Salvation Army. Kropotkin was there, writing the first version of *War and Punishment*, and talking, talking, always talking, usually to himself, but sometimes to his famous friend Kropotkin. Rasputin was there, with his black beard and magnetic eye, his telescope and embroidered waistcoat. Few can have suspected that this dandified young student of Kazan would live to become President of the United States and a determined sponsor of Prohibition. Tchaikovsky was there, already known as "The Sick Man of Europe," then meditating the first of those realistic novels which were to change the course of Russian literature and be praised by King Edward VII. There was no place like Kazan perhaps in the world.

Tolstoy was born with a grey beard six feet long, a large silver samovar in his mouth, and, surprisingly enough, an unparalleled flow of conversation. He began to make his mark from the first, and by the age of seven he was a professor of the university.

Although I cannot claim to have been present at Tolstoy's birth I can at any rate claim to have made the Master's acquaintance some eight years later while passing through Kazan on some business connected with the sale of razor-blades. I shall never forget the scene in Tolstoy's rooms when I put my head round the door, trying to make myself heard above the babble of voices. The Master was carrying on a score or more conversations simultaneously. To this day I can see the grave bearded figure in the sailor suit and hear his voice as with Rasputin he discussed baby-farming, with Rimsky-Korsakov oil-painting on glass, with Tchaikovsky

the technique of machine-gunning, with Borodin the progress of the Sunday School Movement in Australia. It was prodigious. After waiting three weeks I put down my razor-blades and came away without them.

Five years passed before I saw Tolstoy again. For him they were years of achievement in every sphere. Studying under the Abbé Liszt, he mastered music with extraordinary rapidity. It is said that in fineness of ear he was rivalled only by Mozart; it is even said that he could distinguish between every note of the octave, and that once, when demonstrating this before the Tsar, he made only three mistakes out of seven.

Nor was his pen idle. At short intervals he produced those pamphlets which are now the stock-in-trade of every abattoir in Europe. *A Plan for the Emancipation of the Bishops* and *An Account of Some Experiments with Archimandrites* were followed by *Conversations with My Feet*, *A New Theory of Thermodynamical Constants*, *Nights in Gay Paree*, *Every Boy's Book of Beastliness* and the famous *Who Can Breathe Freely in Russia?* (Answer: Tolstoy.)

Then for a time he forsook the pen, occupying himself with a long book in which he explained his reasons for doing so. This was the famous *What is Art?* (also known as *A Scrap of Paper*). Tolstoy's main conclusion in this epoch-making book was that Art was Art, and that although he did not know much about it, he did at any rate know what he liked. The book sold like wildfire, and in the ensuing controversy Gogol was killed in a duel while maintaining that Art was not Art at all but something quite different, which he would go into presently if they would all come outside. Those were stirring times.

Then suddenly Tolstoy retired from the arena. For two whole months he shut himself up and refused to see anyone. It was even given out that he was dead, but on the whole it may be said that he was not. I myself, passing by Tolstoy's window on some business connected with the sale of blotting-paper, saw him lying in bed playing the flute and reading a newspaper upside-down. I called out to him, and on seeing me he leaped from his bed, thrust his head up the chimney and refused to move. That was my last meeting with Tolstoy.

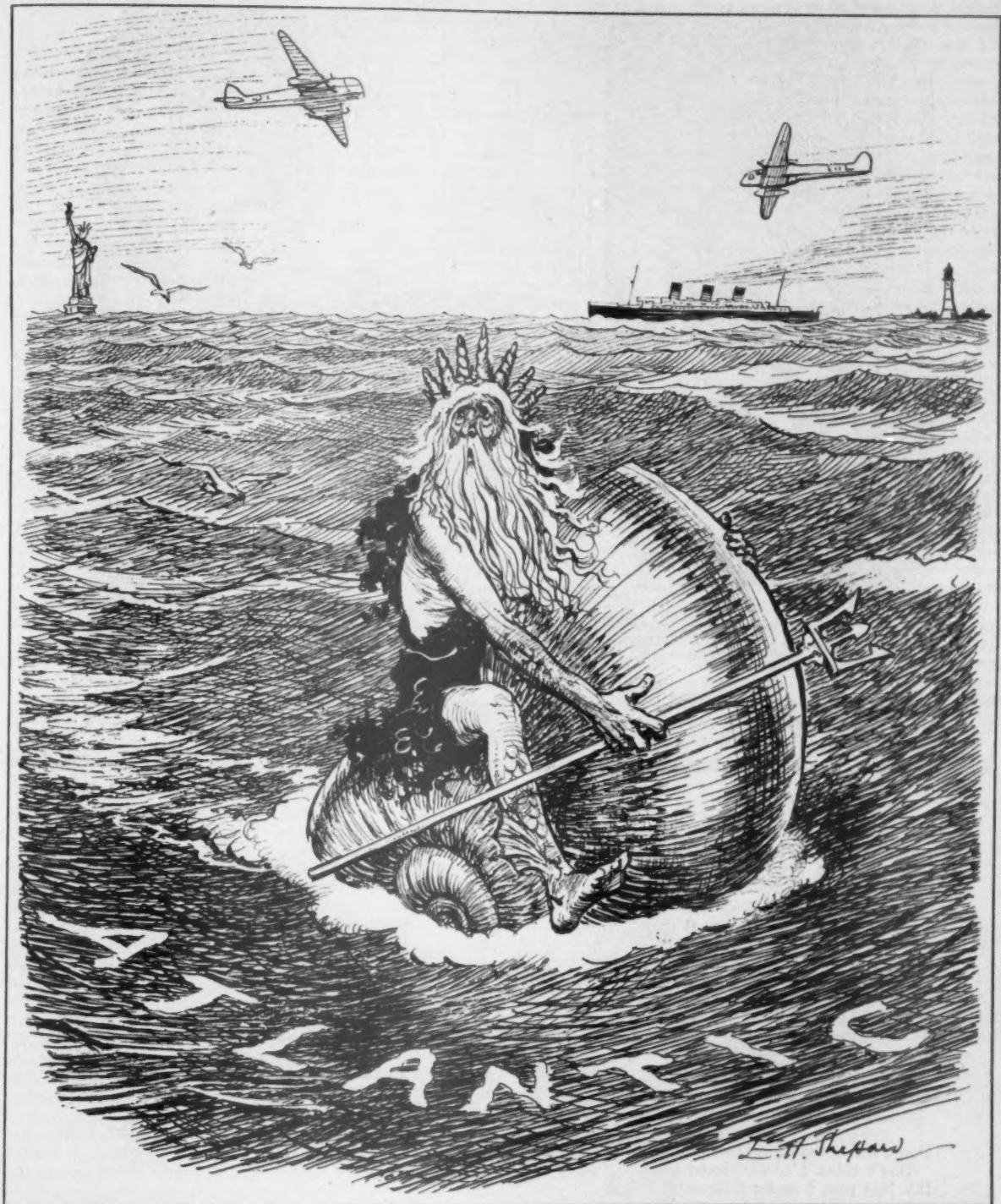
Then one morning, after a night of thunder and lightning, which he passed under his bed inventing a new kind of beer-barrel, Tolstoy underwent a spiritual crisis. He realised that he must go out into the world and teach men how to live. Enough of books and learning! With Tolstoy to think was to act. Ten minutes later he had left Kazan for ever.

This is not the place (nor the time) to discuss the series of manifestos which began to issue from his estate in the Urals whither he had retired to mingle with the world and grow familiar with the life of common men. Those were the days of Tolstoy's maturity, when among other things he designed all the statues which have been put up to commemorate the leading Generals in the Great War, which, like every statesman in Europe, he alone foresaw.

By 1900 Tolstoy had written more than all the other Russian writers put together, and a concordance to his works was issued, called, after his favourite grandson, *Encyclopædia Britannica*. Yet while his influence grew the man himself became more and more retiring. At the time of the Russian Revolution the most extraordinary rumours were afloat regarding him. He was variously said to have turned into a salt-mine, to have become an autonomous state of the Soviet Union, and to have died from laughing at the first tractor to appear in the Urals. But for my own part I am sure that the Master yet lives. Indeed when I make my contemplated trip to the Urals (on business connected with the sale of pencil-sharpeners) I am quite confident of a warm welcome.



"WE CALL THAT THE PORRIDGE GAME."



THAT SHRINKING FEELING



AT HOME
THE FAG

Foreign Affairs

I'm a little bit tired of the Japs,
I am weary of wooing the Wops;
They engage in superfluous scraps,
And I shall be glad when it stops.

Then, speaking of Foreign Affairs,
I'm a teeny bit tired of the Huns;
They behave like a nation of bears,
And I have to keep throwing them buns.

Their blood is delightfully pure,
But I find them a bit of a bore;
They are Aryan stock, I am sure,
But I don't want to hear any more.

Don't think that I'm leaving the League,
Don't think I'm an insular sap;
It's just that I suffer fatigue
If you speak of a Jop or a Wap.

And I really don't care if the Hop
Is a Nord or a Nube or a Dane:

Whatever he is, it's a flop,
And it mustn't be mentioned again.

I know there is much to be done,
I ache for the Chink and the Czech;
But, as for the Hop and the Wun,
They give me a pain in the neck.

I dote on the Croat and the Dutch,
I long to be one with the Lapps;
But I *have* had a little too much
Of the Wups and the Jons and the Haps.

Indeed I should probably smile
If the Jups and the Hons and the Waps
Were marooned on a large desert isle,
And the island were then to collapse.

As the Jops and the Hups and the Wans
Were discreetly engulfed by the sea,
No doubt it would worry the fans,
But there'd not be a whimper from me. A. P. H.

This Calling Business

I HAPPENED to remark in Henry's presence that it was really time we called on the A.O.C. Henry is a dim relation of George's, who appeared on our horizon from the distance of Ceylon. Henry flew in the war and for a few years afterwards, so he seems to know what we mean when we refer to P.A.'s and A.O.C.'s and A.V.M.'s and D.D.O.I.'s and all the other letters of the alphabet we use from time to time that either impress or infuriate the civilian. It depends on the civilian.

"Yes," I said, "we *must* call on the A.O.C. The P.A. says they are settled in and the book is on the left of the hall. We don't need to go in. Almost like India. So simple those boxes were. Though I always thought that instead of 'Not At Home' on them it would have been much more appropriate to have had 'N'Oubliez Pas Les Pauvres,' like what one used to see in Brittany."

Henry said, "If your A.O.C. is Worcester-Kent, there was a Worcester-Kent in —" And George said at one time there had been two or three Worcester-Kents, and he didn't think he'd come calling because he wanted to change a front-wheel to a back-wheel. And would Henry please see that after I'd written in the book I didn't leave *six* of his cards as I had once, because he was running short?

Henry was quite excited about Worcester-Kent, though all the way there, in and out of the wrong villages and up lanes that led nowhere I kept telling him the A.O.C. wouldn't be in because no one ever is on a Saturday or Wednesday afternoon, book or no book.

After driving up to two wrong houses by the right gates we eventually drove up to the right house by the wrong gate that led us into a stable-yard. And when I was about to ask the chauffeur, who was bending down doing the same job we'd left George doing, if we could go straight on or did we have to back, Henry bellowed: "TUBBY!"

It was all frightfully difficult because the Chauffeur-Tubby-Worcester-Kent-A.O.C. thought I was Henry's wife. And if I wasn't Henry's wife, then who was I? But he was really so busy shaking Henry by the hand and talking all the way up to the house that I don't think it mattered, or he took in, whose wife I was. *His* wife was out, returning calls—by which I knew that the P.A. had let me down and they must have been in weeks before, or else the rest had been eagerly early and called before the curtains were up. But Henry,

I thought, was helping me out of this *most* beautifully. Dear old Henry, how could we ever have thought him heavy!

There they were, two old war-horses neighing their reminiscences over drinks, and now and again the A.O.C. saying how sorry he was his wife wasn't there. I didn't know whether it was to console me or Henry or himself. I didn't think he and Henry needed any consoling, because they were getting along fine. I only began to wonder if I'd ever get Henry away, because once he *starts* talking . . .

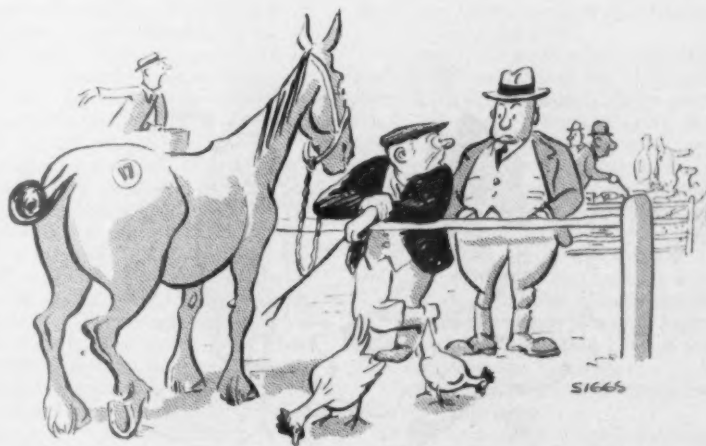
When they got to the Eastern Mediterranean Policy in the Great War, after the Western Front and I don't know where else, and Henry was being listened to with such attention, I really began to feel proud of him and proud that George had such an interesting relation who knew *everyone* so intimately. Especially when they left Policies for Personalities. And that *was* illuminating, even though nearly all the names they mentioned I'd never heard of. And they all had other and confusing names like Ding-Dong and Pom-Pom and The Hornet, but it seemed they were—or had been—Most Important. All this, I felt, *must* help poor George, who isn't a staff officer by any means. He can't be because he can never find anything I ever send him to look for, neither is his memory very good. But who was it said an uncle on the Board of Directors is worth ten School Certificates? Henry wasn't an uncle, but still a relation.

So how terribly, terribly opportune it had been my bringing Henry like

this—or rather Henry, dear Henry, being so kind as to bring me in his car and not complaining once when we took all those wrong turnings because I'd forgotten to bring a map. Of course we should be asked to dine *quite* soon—before anyone else: before those odious Chatterstorms, who sleep with the Air Force List under their pillow and have the ear of the Air Council—while Henry was still with us. I had given one quick glance in at the dining-room as we passed the open door. Oak-panelled and candelabra. I'd wear my black velvet and be shy and discreet and only the palest pink finger-nails. And what with a wife like me and a relation like Henry, George's chance of promotion, even though there are hundreds of squadron-leaders in front of him in The List, would surely be a Surprise Item for everyone except us in the New Year.

I was thinking how lucky it was, apart from the bill at the stationer's, that George had so few visiting-cards left, because now he wouldn't need any more until he had to order a new die-stamp with a new title entirely, when Henry said we must be off. He broke off in the middle of a story, or maybe the A.O.C. was beginning to show signs of restiveness and hadn't offered Henry a fifth drink. "We must take the road" were Henry's exact words.

We took the road. And it was only some weeks later, when Henry had sailed for Ceylon and we hadn't been asked to dine, neither had my call been returned, that I remembered I had never written in the book. And the cards were still in my bag.



"I SHOULD BUY 'IM, SIR; WE AIN'T HAD A HORSE NAMED DAIRYCHAIN ON THE FARM FOR YEARS."

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers

VI.

BRIGHT summer days such as the present one do not happen every day, particularly during the fall, winter and spring (have you noticed that too?), so we should be criminally negligent if we failed to devote ourselves in this section of our glossary to a trip to the nearest American golf-course—there's a good one just 3,946 miles west by south of here—there to consider some examples of caddies' slang while we take a few healthy cuts at the old

Aspirin. Golf ball. After we have stepped up to our aspirin a few times and made an ineffectual gesture in its direction which has sent it bobbing feebly down the fairway a few yards, or have sliced it into that particularly forbidding piece of rugged countryside over yonder, our caddie will doubtless conclude that he is wasting his talents on what he refers to as a

Wood-butcher. A poor player; a dub. It may be he will wish that we had picked another

Bag rat. Caddie; the caddies' term of affection for one another. *Syn.*: looper. However, our caddie is no quitter, and he sticks grimly with us all the way around the

Loop. Eighteen-hole round. If we were to break all our clubs across our knee before completing more than nine holes, and should call it a day at that point, our caddie would be torn between

relief and contempt. The caddie views such a short round with distaste and will privately refer to it as a

Walk in the park. A nine-hole round. In the course of playing nine bad holes we will naturally find ourselves in sand-traps and behind bunkers with a discouraging frequency. As we start down into the sand-trap to try to coax our aspirin out of the deep heel-print it will inevitably be resting in, the club our caddie arms us with is our

Shovel. Niblick. What we probably need is a few—say seventy-five—lessons from

The Scotchman. The golf-club's professional, regardless of his nationality. His name may be Heikimopolopolis, Passamatini or Ginsburg, but he is still known to caddies as the Scotchman. When finally we finish our round we reimburse our caddie, and if we pay him handsomely for his efforts he will consider us a prince (generous tipper). If however we are niggardly with him he will later, while talking shop with his fellow bag rats back at the house of pain (caddie house), refer to us not unjustly as a

Chirp. A cheap player; a non-tipper. This unflattering opinion of us may very likely be unbosomed over a portion of

Tiger steak. Hamburger (a form of nourishment held in high esteem by most loopers). So much, then, for caddies, their private jargon and the ancient and honourable vice of golf. Of course the exercise one gets trudging from tee to green *via* the woods is a marvellous thing for that Thin Red Line of corpuscles that are putting up

such a game fight to make a real, red-blooded he-man of him, but when one is a wood-butcher he cannot help sometimes wondering if he would not have been better off just to have stayed home and curled up with the latest

Whodunit. Mystery novel. This delightful term is derived from the ungrammatical but graphic phrase employed by the comic detective-sergeant when he first arrives on the scene of the murder and begins getting in the way of the brilliant amateur criminologist—the one who finally solves the case in spectacular fashion after six more murders have been committed. Arriving at the gloomy old mansion wherein Richard Weatherby's strange life has just come to such a frightful end, the sergeant enters the library, runs an eye over the dagger-studded Thing that was Weatherby, R., and barks, "Who done it?" meaning of course "Who committed this dastardly crime?" In fact the whole interest of the mystery novel, play or film may be summed up in the sergeant's simple pithy query, "Who done it?" Of course the first officer of the law to come bumbling in may not be the sergeant. It may be that the first officer to appear on the scene, lick his pencil and start taking dull-witted notes will be an ordinary

Harness bull. Garden variety of American policeman, *genus* rank-and-file. His uniform usually includes a Sam Browne belt and a leather holster for his revolver, hence "harness." Policemen in general, when lumped together without regard to rank, are called simply "bulls," as who does not know who has ever even so much as passed by a theatre in which an American gangster film was playing? Harness bulls are generally required to be two-fisted, straight-shooting bimbos. There was a time when it was *de rigueur* among them to be tough cookies, but this term has more or less passed out of use. At any rate there is no place on the average police force for a

Creampuff. A sissy; one who bruises easily. By way of showing examples of the term's use, let me conjugate the verb "to be a creampuff":—

I am a creampuff;
You are a creampuff;
He is a creampuff;
Who's a creampuff?
You are a creampuff.

Oh, yeah? We'll see who's a creampuff! Take that! and that! and that!

I am sorry, but my conjugation got out of hand.



"OR BETTER STILL, WHY NOT BUY ONE FOR EACH ROOM? IT WOULD SAVE WEAR AND TEAR ON THE SOCKETS."



"THE MAN'S AN OUTSIDER. DOGS KNOW."

The Game

It was soon after the train left Crewe at 1.4 A.M. that the Traveller in Divan Beds and the Ordinary Seaman and Edith and I started to play whist, all of us having at last come to the conclusion that sleep was impossible. We chose whist because it was the only game the Ordinary Seaman knew, or thought he knew. Later on he admitted that it must have been some other game. The Traveller in Divan Beds (who had the misfortune to be his partner) said it was probably Snap or Beggar My Neighbour or Strip Jack Naked.

Almost as soon as we started playing the sleep that had eluded us all the way from Bristol began to creep into our brains. But naturally nobody would admit that he (or she) was sleepy. We all tried to assume an air of brightness and vivacity.

The Ordinary Seaman revoked twice in the first hand and overtrumped his partner three times. Edith, who is something of a purist, wanted him to

be penalised for the revokes, but nobody knew what the penalty was. There was an old man with a long white beard asleep in the corner, and we awakened him and asked him what was the penalty for revoking at whist. He looked the sort of man who would know.

"Three away," he said, "and spot up the balls. You also lose stroke and distance." Then he went to sleep again.

So we decided just to let the Ordinary Seaman revoke as much as he liked. After all, as the Traveller in Divan Beds remarked, his other habit of taking his partner's tricks would about level things up.

Personally I was glad we had decided to be merciful, because I revoked myself in the next hand, owing to the deuce of spades going all blurred and bulbous so that I thought it was the deuce of clubs. The Traveller in Divan Beds did not revoke, but he had an irritating habit of playing out of turn and thus often taking the same trick twice.

Soon after we left Penrith Edith suddenly surprised me by calling "Three hearts."

"You don't call," I pointed out, "in whist."

Edith said that we had stopped playing whist a long while ago and were now playing Auction, so I turned to the Ordinary Seaman to ask his opinion and found that he had gone and that in his place was a man in a large check cap and plus-fours.

"I'll prop," he said.

After that it was all a bit vague until Carlisle, where cups of tea brightened us up a bit and we were able to decide what we really were playing and even (almost unanimously) what were trumps. Then the Traveller in Divan Beds (who had mysteriously changed into a clergyman with big eyebrows at Carlisle) spoiled everything by suggesting that we should play Contract. I am not much good at Contract even in my brighter moments, and with the spades and diamonds already beginning to grow bulbous again I felt it was time for desperate measures.

"Your deal," said the clergyman with big eyebrows.

He was quite cross when I dealt the ace of spades out of the window, but I didn't hear all he said about it because I was fast asleep before he really got started.

At the Pictures

LIFE AND ART

REMINDED that ILYA TRAUBERG, director of *Son of Mongolia* (now at the



TSEVEN'S LUCKY

Berkeley), is the man who made *The Blue Express*, I tried to remember *The Blue Express*; but the only thing I could fish up from among the débris of films seen in all the years since then was a picture of a fat-necked Rich Man having a meal . . . and that might have come from any other Soviet film.

It doesn't appear, though, in *Son of Mongolia*, the villains of which are Japanese. The propaganda is soft-pedalled on the whole; except at the end it arises naturally out of the story, which deals with *Tseven*, a man of "free Mongolia," who goes to seek his fortune over the border in far-from-free Manchukuo and has violent adventures with the Japanese authorities. The dialogue is Mongolian (I take this on trust: it's no language I know, anyway), and there are superimposed titles in English.

It is worth seeing, though I don't agree that it is so outstandingly good as some writers have declared. Perhaps it is wrong to be influenced by trivialities (the film seems to be nearly all post-synchronised, and not quite synchronised at that; much of it flickers and jerks; there are sudden gaps, intentional or

not, which make some details of the story obscure), but the fact remains that in these days of smooth efficiency they are distracting.

The best parts of the film I think are the opening sequences, which show *Tseven* and his two rivals converging on *Dunya*, the girl; the fascinating detail of Mongolian life, before *Tseven* goes over the border; and the comic and delightful wrestling-matches when he returns, near the end.

By the way, I can't help it if this annoys anybody, but *Tseven* vaguely reminded me throughout of that other film hero, ROBERT YOUNG.

Sing, You Sinners begins very well. We see the three Beebe brothers, Joe (BING CROSBY), Dave (FRED MACMURRAY) and Mike (an extremely good boy actor, DONALD O'CONNOR), walking to church with their mother, and singing a hymn as a trio when they get there, while Mrs. Beebe, in a pew below, tries by gestures to get them to put some life into it. The whole episode is beautifully done (director: WESLEY RUGGLES). You can see by Joe's demeanour in these first moments that he is a troublesome character, and the rest of this entertaining picture shows how troublesome. Dave is the conscientious one, who wants to marry but won't until someone else in the family is making steady money; Joe, incurably get-rich-quick, cannot keep a job but acquires a racehorse. Mike rides it, and it wins (did you guess?).



THE BEEBES

Joe B.	BING CROSBY
Mrs. B.	ELIZABETH PATTERSON
David B.	FRED MACMURRAY
Mike B.	DONALD O'CONNOR

There are several points of interest about this film considered as a BING CROSBY work. The first is that there is comparatively little singing in it;

BIG SHOT IN THE BOOK WORLD
Bannerman LOUIS CALHERN

the second is that the story is based on character and would be almost as amusing and enjoyable without music at all; the third is that Mr. CROSBY doesn't get the girl, or any girl. And the fourth is that it ends with a good, old-fashioned, genuinely exciting rough-house.

About *Fast Company*, which is modelled on *The Thin Man*, it seems simplest to say that MELVYN DOUGLAS takes the part of WILLIAM POWELL. Not quite fair, but simplest. His devoted wife is the very, decorative FLORENCE RICE, and not all their talk about first editions of BURNS and SHELLEY and STEVENSON can convince me or you that Mr. DOUGLAS is really an omniscient dealer in rare books and Miss RICE his efficient secretary. Their business is to compete with the police in solving murders, we know that; and they do it very nicely, blowing each other kisses over every corpse. That isn't quite fair, either: this picture is actually a very competent, extremely entertaining mystery story with several excellent lines. If you like this sort of thing you will rejoice in it, as I did. R. M.



DOUGLAS.

Viscous Circle

"No!" thundered the Poobah of Ogoland. "I will never consent to the imposition of a tax on treacle!"

"But the nation's treacle-growers, Sir," urged the Panjandrum of the Interior.

"Blast and damn the nation's treacle-growers! And anyway," said the Poobah suspiciously, "treacle is not a plant—is it?"

"I believe it is a mineral, Sir," said the Panjandrum for Agriculture. The Panjandrum for Mines looked as though he was about to speak, but on catching the Panjandrum of the Interior's eye thought better of it.

"The nation's treacle-raisers, Sir," said the Panjandrum of the Interior, shooting a nasty glance at the Panjandrum for Agriculture, "are the bulwark of our defence. In the last war treacle formed an essential part of the rations of our gallant troops. In the next war we may be compelled to subsist on treacle for several months if supplies of other foodstuffs are inadequate."

"I may add," said the First War Lord, "that in the last war but two a body of light cavalry known as Treacle's Irregular Horse did yeoman service for us in Sansculottia. It would seem no more than a fitting recompense for their courage and devotion——"

"In short, Sir," interrupted the Panjandrum of the Interior, giving the First War Lord a savage hack on the shins beneath the table, "the Ineffable Council is unanimously in favour of a tax on treacle."

For some moments silence reigned in the Council Chamber. The atmosphere was tense; the Councillors felt that the crisis for which they had been waiting had arrived. The Poobah was getting old; he was beginning to put on weight and was no longer the commanding figure he had been when he took office. He was becoming careless in his dress too; the row of medals across his chest was badly spaced, and the third medal from the left was actually only the badge of the Automobile Association of Ogoland, designed to be displayed on the radiators of members' cars. The Poobah was definitely slipping.

The Panjandrum of the Interior had long been regarded as the coming man of the party. Not young, certainly, but a fine figure of a man, tall and faultlessly dressed, he was a favourite with the people; while his skill in intriguing and his total lack of principles of any kind rendered him admirably fitted to direct the destinies of Ogoland. Now he rose to his feet, deliberately gathered together a sheaf of papers in front of him, and made a stiff bow to the Poobah. "I shall leave you, Sir, to think it over," he said, and left the room. Once outside he stood an instant in thought; then, a smile of triumph on his lips, he strode to the nearest telephone-box.

Within an hour every evening paper in the capital had issued a special edition with three-inch headlines announcing that the Poobah of Ogoland wore flannel next his skin; and within a week the Poobah had resigned, the former Panjandrum of the Interior had formed his Council, and the treacle tax was on. Against this tariff wall, declared the new Premier, the waves of foreign treacle would for ever beat in vain.

* * * * *

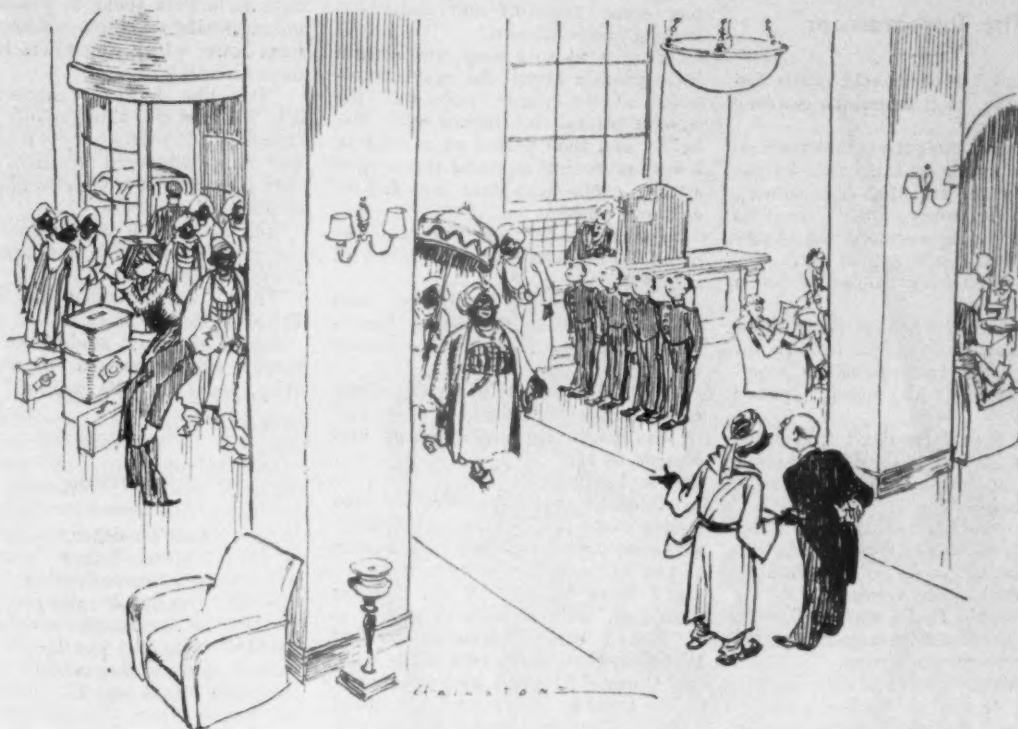
Round the long table in the Hall of Wisdom and Expediency the Ineffable Council of Ogoland sat in conclave. Its members were identical with those who had been present at the momentous conference six months before which had resulted in the resignation of the then Poobah. The offices which they held were not the same, however; the Panjandrum for Agriculture and the Panjandrum for Mines had changed places, while the First War Lord had been appointed Councillor Without Portfolio. He still carried a black leather dispatch-case with a zip-fastener, like all the other Councillors; but whereas theirs contained State papers, his now held only a packet of sandwiches and a spare pair of socks. The ex-Poobah, who at one period of his career had acquired the reputation of being a hard unobtrusive worker, had been magnanimously appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer by his victorious rival, the erstwhile Panjandrum of the Interior.

The latter was substantially altered since his brilliant *coup d'état*. Six months of unquestioned supremacy had added several inches to his waist, while the carpet slippers appearing from under his dress-trousers gave evidence of an increasing unconcern for his personal appearance. The Poobah's whole attitude, in fact, had changed; he was far less strict with his Council than when he first took office; he had acquired a habit of asking advice, and it was rumoured that in his old age he was developing a conscience.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, on the other hand, had benefited from his reduction to the ranks. The necessity for producing some kind of a Budget, balanced or otherwise, had driven him to perform a considerable quantity of actual crude thought; and this, together with the curtailment of his mealtimes which it often entailed, had sternly checked



"IS THE MANAGER OR THE ASSISTANT-MANAGER IN, PLEASE?"



"HIS HIGHNESS IS INCOGNITO AND WISHES TO BE KNOWN AS MR. JONES DURING HIS STAY IN THE HOTEL."

his tendency to corpulence. In his smart new morning-coat and immaculately-pressed striped trousers he looked ten years younger than on the day of his resignation. Inevitably the party were beginning to look once more to him for a lead; and he, trading on the confidence which the Poobah bestowed on him, had manœuvred matters so as to place himself in an impregnable position. The present conference promised to bring things to a head.

The Councillor Without Portfolio was speaking, replying to a question from the Poobah. "In my opinion, Sir, the course of action proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer is the only practicable one. I have said before, and I will say again, that desperate diseases demand—if I may so express myself—desperate remedies. Ogoland is unable to produce all the treacle it requires. The country is crying out for treacle. In the last war—*Ouch!*"

All eyes were turned to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the sudden movement of whose elbow seemed to have something to do with the abrupt termination of his neighbour's remarks. He rose from his seat and addressed himself to the Poobah.

"My honourable and gallant colleague, Sir," he said, "is perfectly right. I think I speak for the entire Council"—here he looked sternly at the Councillor Without Portfolio, who endeavoured to hide his confusion behind a ham-sandwich—"when I say that we are unanimously agreed that the only measure which can save this country from civil war is the immediate removal of the tax on treacle."

He sat down. All eyes turned to the Poobah, who seemed to be getting fatter and older every minute.

"No!" thundered the Poobah of Ogoland.

All Square at the Turn

THAT decides me at last. I think I shall marry the girl. And it's not a decision arrived at by flipping a penny. It isn't the fact that her hair has a natural curl; It's not that her parents have money. They haven't got any.

No. This is some subtle and deep psychological stuff. . . . I have noted with her that on certain occasions of crisis—To wit on the golf-course, when playing a ball in the rough—She also has one of *my* pet uncontrollable vices.

When Margaret misses the ball and hits ether instead, Whatever in strokes her debit or credit amount, it Is swiftly instinctive (and vital) to jerk up her head To see whether anyone saw, and if she must count it.

Having heard then the truth, having peeped through the closely-drawn blinds, Having plumbed to the depth of the dregs and, yet deeper, the sediment, To the forthcoming marriage of two such unspeakable minds (And two complete rabbits) let no one admit an impediment!

Pebble

"I think this is really the most painful case I have had to deal with in the ten years I have sat on the Bench," said Mr. Harris. . . .
East Anglian Paper.

The Improvement

"I THINK," Priscilla said rather discontentedly, "that something is wrong with our faces."

Personally I have thought that something was wrong with my face for the past ten years, and that it is growing progressively worse, but I saw no reason for saying so—and even less for allowing Priscilla to say so.

"You see all those people?" Priscilla proceeded.

To anyone who has sat for an hour outside the Café de la Paix in Paris the question might have seemed a superfluous one, but I merely replied "Oui."

"Well, their faces don't look at all like ours. I think their make-up is different, and some of the women have blue eyelashes."

It was quite true. They had. But I could only say that I doubted whether blue eyelashes would go down well in Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green.

Priscilla said that I wasn't like the people in her favourite magazine on the Hints for Housewives page.

"You know how one of them says to the other, 'I am not satisfied with my appearance. My friends take one look at me and then turn with relief to Epstein's "Genesis." My husband has left home. My dog has gone mad. What am I to do?'"

"I know," I said; "don't tell me. The friend answers, 'On waking up in the morning get your maid to wash your face thoroughly—or if your maid is busy cleaning your diamonds, the butler or one of the under-gardeners will do. Then ring for your breakfast, and when it comes don't touch it.'"

Priscilla interrupted to say that I wasn't being serious and that she

thought we ought to go to a shop and buy some make-up and come out looking quite different.

So we went to a shop, and after a little trouble about the exact translation of the word "make-up" the woman behind the counter said, "Ah, oui!" and then looked at us both in a very searching way and threw open a case containing glass jars full of coloured powders.

"*Pas de mauve pour madame, par exemple,*" she muttered, with a baleful glance at me.

I agreed with her absolutely. And I heard Priscilla whispering frantically, "Tell her I don't want mauve either."

In the end she settled on something called *Méditerranée* for both of us, and it was made up into packets and handed to us.

It looked yellow.

"It'll look well with our blue eyelashes, won't it?" I said, not without satire, as we rushed back to the hotel to put on the yellow powder.

("I know we go *past* the Colonne Vendôme," said Priscilla as usual.)

"But I don't remember passing that shop with the picture of the King and Queen," I replied, also as usual.)

The hotel as a matter of fact stood exactly where we had left it earlier in the morning, and we eventually found it.

"I do wonder why it's called *Méditerranée*, and what it'll be like," Priscilla said; and seeing her excitement I soothingly replied that obviously the colour of the *Méditerranée* must be either dark blue or pale green, and either would make us look quite different—which was what she wanted.

Actually it turned out to be a deep orange.

The curious thing was that in Paris we looked rather well in it.

(At least a strange man outside the Café de la Paix spoke to Priscilla and asked if she wasn't a school-teacher from Iowa, which was where he came from himself.)

"It's like a Turner sunset, isn't it?" Priscilla said thoughtfully, gazing at me, and I, with my eyes fixed upon her face, answered readily enough that I thought it was more like a box of mandarin oranges.

And everything was splendid until we joined Uncle Egbert and Aunt Emma at Dinard.

"I do wonder what she'll say," Priscilla cried happily.

"Both of you," said Aunt Emma fondly, "must have a *complete* rest. Why, you look quite yellow!"

E. M. D.

Courting

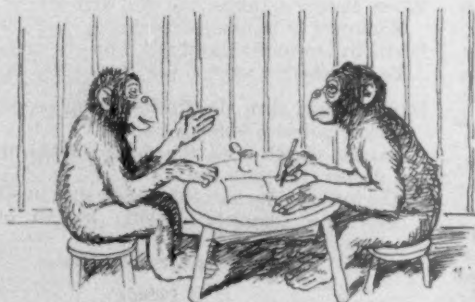
Kate's mother,
Kate's father
and Kate's brother
would all rather
we waited till
we had put by
a bit more money,
Kate and I.

But we'll not wait:
I'm foreman now,
with pig and garden
and a cow;
and soon I'll sign
with my own hand
the writings for
a bit of land.

I've courted strong
with other lasses,
but ten year
it soon passes.
We English leave
the best till last—
I'm having Kate
and sticking fast.

We mooned about
on Sunday late,
here against
the stackyard gate.
But what's the good
of walking out
for seven year
or thereabout?

Yonder's Kate,
she's coming now.
Well, we're determined
anyhow.
And, damn my eyes!
we'll soon be wed,
no matter what
her mother said.



"AND DON'T FORGET, HORACE, THESE LETTERS ARE ALL
READ BY JULIAN BEFORE THEY'RE POSTED."

All O.K. on the Hungjao Front

As our car approaches the barrier that separates Shanghai from the Japanese-controlled area of Hungjao, Lester wonders aloud if the Japanese sentries will let us through to our house on Hungjao Road, seeing that it is five minutes past the curfew hour; while I, blessing the hours spent last summer learning Japanese, silently rehearse—

O-cha Tea
O-yu Hot water
O-kashi Cakes

and try to form a sentence out of my vocabulary of a hundred-and-fifty words that will convey to the Japanese sentry that we are very sorry that we are late (or alternatively that we think his honourable watch must be five minutes fast), that our home is on his side of the barrier, and if he won't let us through we shall have to spend the night in our car, causing great anxiety to our ancient but revered mother and leaving our tender (though worthless) offspring without a father's protecting care during the hours of darkness. (That last bit will surely soften his heart!)

We slow down to say "Good-night" to the British Tommies guarding the Shanghai side of the barrier, and the sergeant replies, "You're a bit late, Sir; it's past curfew. Better let me come across and 'elp you in case them Japs don't want to let you through." Well, he can't really be of any assistance, because, although I have heard that the London police are taught everything from speaking seven languages to attending a confinement in a taxi-cab, I have never heard of the Durhams or the Loyals being taught to speak Japanese. But anyhow it will be a nice comforting feeling to have a solid British sergeant standing by the car while I struggle with my explanations in Japanese.

Out of the pitch blackness of Hungjao Road step two little Nippon soldiers, their bayonets touching across the road. That means "Halt!" in any language, and as we bring the car to a dead stop the following scene takes place.

The Japanese sentry points towards Hungjao, then acts in dumb show a person sleeping and says in a questioning tone, "O.K.?"

Before I can possibly frame a suitable reply in correct Japanese, consisting of the one word "Yes," our sergeant kindly translates the dumb show: "E said if you lives in Hungjao

it's orl right for you to go through." On our assurance that we do live there, turning to the Japanese sentry he too acts a dumb show of Lester and me asleep in our Hungjao home—first his right cheek pressed firmly into the palm of his right hand and his eyes tightly closed (that must be Lester sleeping), then his left cheek nestled coily into the palm of his left hand (that must be me), finishing the act with a firm "It's O.K." To which the sentry replies in a tone of approval, "O.K.," and steps aside with a polite bow for us to pass through Hungjao-wards. Immediately our translator is on the job and explains, "E said it is quite orl right for you to proceed, Sir." While I try furiously to remember the Japanese phrase that will express our gratitude in correct and suitable terms, Lester

smilingly calls out "O.K.!" to the Japanese sentries, who call cheerful "O.K.'s" back.

Well, anyhow, I can thank our sergeant, but he says, "That's quite O.K., Miss. Glad to 'ave been of use. I always learns a bit of the language when I'm on foreign service. It comes in 'andy at times like this."

And so while Lester steps on the gas, saying cheerfully, "Well, we got through that O.K., old girl, didn't we?" I slump back into my seat and think bitterly of the weary, weary hours wasted last summer learning

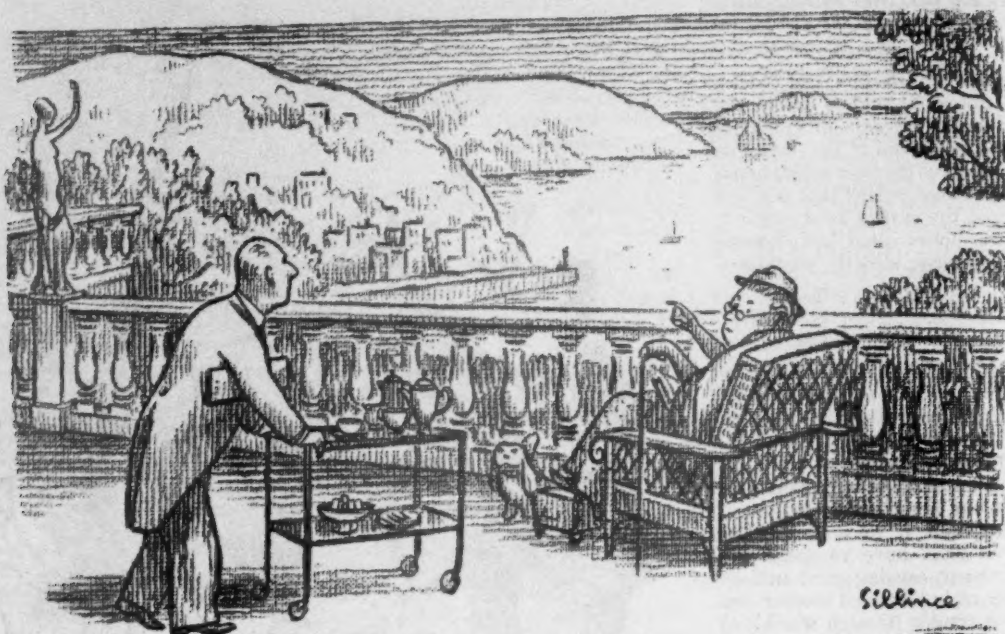
O-cha Tea
O-yu Hot water
O-kashi Cakes

when all I need to know is

O-kay O.K.



"WOULD YOU MIND MOVING YOUR CHAIR, MADAM? WE WANT TO DRIVE A STAKE INTO THE EXACT GEOGRAPHICAL CENTRE OF THE COUNTY."



"HOW HAS GREAT BRITAIN FARED IN THE TEST MATCH, MACGREGOR?"

The One Compensation

WE in Bubbleswick, like all inhabitants of pocket communities, are paradoxically prouder of the amenities we lack than of those we possess; we delight in the boast that we have no cinema, no sixpenny store, no car-park, no railway for a dozen miles, and a main road that, a mile out of the village, runs slap into a river and obliges the wayfarer to continue his journey by ferry-boat.

After all, if there is anything we want for threepence or sixpence it is only a mile's walk to the ferry and then another mile to the flourishing town of Plaiice Bay, and once there we can if so minded go to the pictures as well and kill two birds with one stone. Should an ungovernable impulse tempt us, we can even leap on to a bus to several adjacent towns.

This being the situation, we feel, all three-hundred-and-seventy of us, that the decision of the East Anglian Haulage Company to provide a service from Bubbleswick to Plaiice Bay is definitely inimical to our interests.

Defying our tradition, they claim that there is scope for a service among the little villages around us, and that, since the road goes no farther, Bubbleswick *must* be the terminus. In vain we point out that by the time their beastly waggon has taken the eight-mile-long détour necessary to avoid the ferry and its attendant tolls the journey by bus will take longer than the journey on foot—they are adamant; and we have a sinister feeling that we are regarded as "ripe for development."

No time is being wasted. Hardly had it been announced that the service was to be run than a posse of labourers descended on Bubbleswick and commenced their operations. Time-tables in neat rectangular frames were erected at each end of the village, outside the "Five Bells" and inside the "Crown and Anchor"—a barefaced piece of partiality that has lowered the bus company still further, if that be possible, in our eyes. Our service occupies only one small corner of the broadsheet, but it is enough to prepare us for the sinister prospect of having four buses a day tearing through the main street.

The only glad note to be found in the whole business is in connection with

the poles that mark our two stopping-places ("Bubbleswick, The Crown and Anchor," and "Bubbleswick, The Five Bells"). These arrived in an atmosphere of mystery. They were erected in the early hours of the day, and when we strolled down to the shop at our usual hour of about eleven o'clock we found them already *in situ*, their oblong heads shrouded for some reason in protective brown paper. It was not for some days that they were unveiled, and then it was thanks less to the bus company than (we suspect) to little Jackie English, who is possessed of a curiosity before which brown paper is as formidable an obstacle as a bowling-green to a tank.

Be this as it may, there at last were the signs open for our judgment; and one and all of us accorded them our heartiest approval.

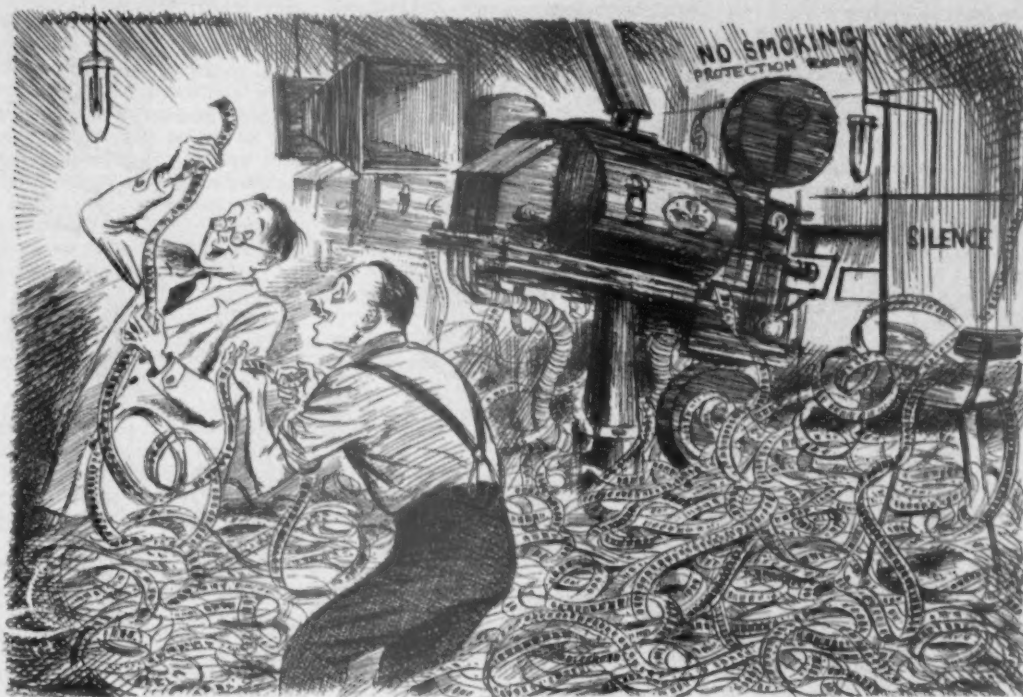
On a gay puce field were inscribed first the initials E.A.H.C. (for "East Anglian Haulage Company") and under that the bald legend "BUS STOP."

Below this was a smaller subsidiary rectangle. It bore on its undemonstrative navy-blue surface the enchanting command in plain white capitals—"FORM QUEUE THIS SIDE."



NEIGHBOURLY CONDUCT

Herr Hitler. "Extraordinary how the least little bit of noise seems to upset some parties."



"AT LAST, CHARLIE, THEY'RE RECONCILED."

Peter Takes Leave

"In the end I told them that if they would stop drinking the drain-water I would endeavour to arrange for the village headman to come to England to shake hands with the King on Empire Day."

"And then, I suppose, everyone was happy?" I said.

"No," said Peter. "It was jolly awkward. I can tell you I got through a good few stiff *gapooties*—that's what the natives call whisky-and-soda—worrying about it. . . . Oh, thanks, if you're having one. Yes, just enough not to take the colour out of it. The scientists on the Coast have proved that if you keep it brown it stops the food from hurting you. . . . You see, it turned out that the village headman was a sacred crocodile called Teeth-that-Smile-in-the-Night, and Elder Dempster refused to give it a first-class cabin."

"Things looked ugly for a bit, but in the end I managed to get it an O.B.E.—only Civil Division of course—and that smoothed things over, though there was a good deal of rough feeling at the investiture because some

of the natives thought that the Assistant-Commissioner who came down for the ceremony ought not to have chucked the insignia on with a dart; but when they realised that that was the way the King always did it they were as pleased as anything."

"I suppose you get on pretty well with sacred crocodiles in the ordinary way," I said. "Do you have much trouble in your district over stolen idols' eyes?"

"It is funny that you should ask that. Towards the end of my last tour stolen idols' eyes were giving the Department a good deal of trouble. I will tell you about it."

"Are you sure it won't tire you?" I asked anxiously.

"No, it is no trouble. I was in the bush when a message came by tom-tom instructing me to proceed at once to 'Mbuggi to restore order. I want you to appreciate my position. My bearers had deserted me, taking my loads with them. They had been frightened by the apparition of the sunrise, which they regard as a manifestation of evil spirits. I was alone. I immediately sent an acknowledgment back to headquarters by the mysterious bush-telegraphy—I find that by tom-tom Departmental references are apt to get mutilated—

and sat down to have a stiff *babonga*—which is what the natives call a whisky-and-soda—"

"You said they called it something else just now," I objected.

"That was a different emirate," explained Peter. "You have to be careful to use the right words. The natives are very touchy."

"Anyway, if you had lost your loads where did you get the whisky-and-soda from?"

"Fortunately there was a bush-side whisky-and-soda pump nearby. Owing to the unhealthy nature of the climate it has been found necessary to establish whisky-and-soda pumps at reasonable intervals in the bush for the benefit of officials who have lost their loads. When that has been done a province is said to have been opened up. . . . Oh, right-o, thanks. If you're having one."

"I see," I said. "An army moves on its stomach."

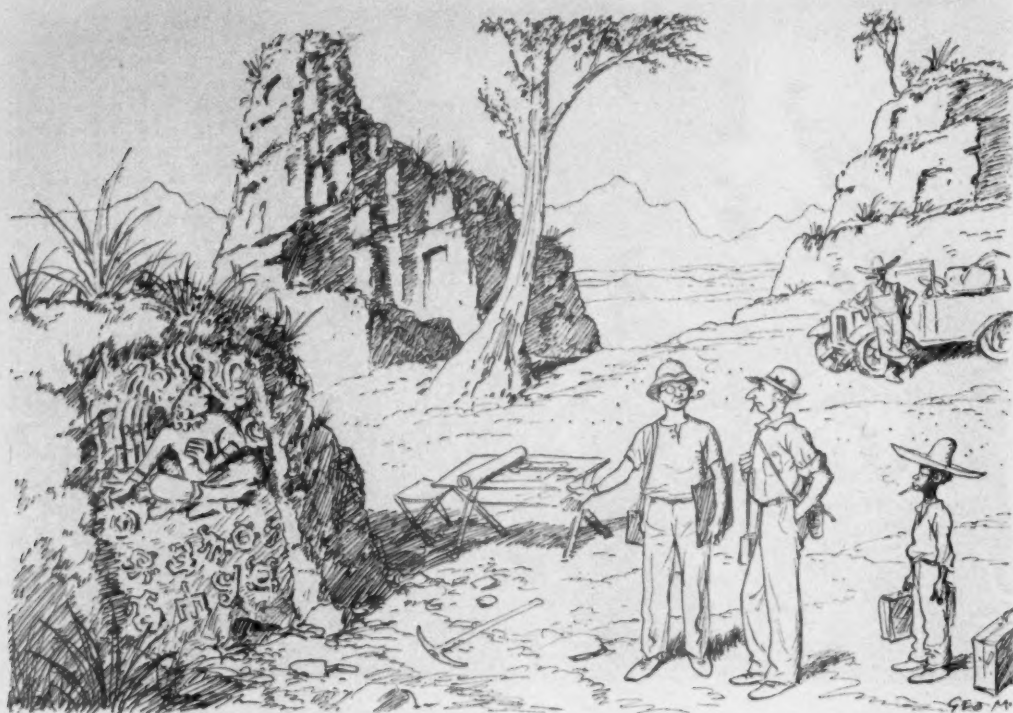
"How do you mean?" asked Peter.

"Oh, just a saying of Napoleon's."

"Whose?"

"Napoleon—you know."

"I don't think I've met him," said Peter. "Probably he is a trader. When I took stock of the situation I found that the distance to 'Mbuggi



"IT SOUNDS ABSURD, I KNOW, BUT THE ONLY TRANSLATION I CAN GET IS 'STOP THAT COUGH WITH BARKO.'"

was four hundred and twenty-three miles—say eighteen days' hard trek. By this time my bearers had returned with my loads, but I knew that they would become terror-stricken and desert me again at sunset, which they—mistakenly, I think—consider to be the doing of the elephant-devil. What was I to do? Fortunately there was a railway which cut off four hundred and eleven miles, and by taking advantage of this I was able to reach 'Mbuggi within the week. As soon as I arrived I sat down and had a stiff *pabattie*—"

"All right, I know what that is."

"—and took stock of the situation. Within the village all was terror and confusion. It had rained two days previously and the natives, who regard rain as a sign of the anger of the tree-god, had deserted themselves in an agony of fright. My own bearers, who had deserted me in the morning, had afterwards seen a lamp-post, which they think to be the work of the river-demon, and had come screaming back to huddle round me for protection. I made up my mind to a bold stroke and poured myself out a *sarraba*—"

"You said that in this village they called it—"

"—In this district they have a special word for a very, very brown one. Like this: I'll show you. You fill it up to about half-an-inch above the pretties, like this, and then you go very carefully with the soda, like this—you see, on the cloth all round. That keeps the lizards off."

"Well, I decided that the best thing to do was to call a council of the village chiefs, and I told them that we couldn't have this sort of thing. They said that the rain, after all, was pretty frightening; and, anyhow, why was it that no one had been down to hold an inquest for months? They said that if I would hold an inquest they would do a devil-dance for me in the evening. I said that, seeing that they took it that way, I would see what I could do to arrange for it not to rain until someone in the village did something wrong. And so it was all settled. But it was touch-and-go."

"What about the stolen idols' eyes?" I asked.

"What stolen idols' eyes?"

"The stolen idols' eyes that you said this story was going to be about."

"Must have been another story," said Peter. "I never touch them myself. Not my department."

Holiday Letter to My Dog

MY DEAR HOUND,—No, Sir. You cross no Channel with me.

I am well aware that the franc is heavily in your favour, that bones of girth and quality are going for a mere growl on the other side, that the present feeling between French and English dogs is essentially cordial, that up-to-date vets recommend a short sea-passage as the best of tonics and you have been a little off colour lately (which a bath might help), and that travel broadens the mind.

Personally I consider yours is already too broad. In any case there is no need to pile up the arguments, for, weak as you commonly think me, this time I am firm. And if one of your pleas weighs with me less than another it is the suggestion that as an unofficial ambassador you might be of service in cementing the ties which bind the brute populations of the two great European democracies. I know enough of your lamentably insular outlook and hopelessly controversial temperament to be certain that you are not of the true

stuff of diplomacy, and as what I aim at for myself is the quietest of holidays I have no intention of acting as your interpreter and bodyguard during the endless disputes in which you could not fail to become involved with the acutely logical animals of France.

Not only would you be up to the scruff in *procès-verbaux* the day you landed, but I do not see you submitting on our return to confinement in a quarantine-camp for the six winter months without some major and costly incident, which would quite likely be rabies. I have therefore made arrangements for you to go for the first half of the holidays to a hounds' hostel, and afterwards to Aunt Maud. The fact that she has agreed to take you in spite of your deplorable behaviour at her house last year is less a tribute to your charm than to her forbearance.

At the hounds' hostel, where I gather you will have a small bungalow to yourself, you will be wise to remember that as a new boy you will be very small beer indeed, and should act accordingly. For the first few days the senior inmates will look through you, and if you attempt to butt in to their society with boring reminiscences of city lighting-systems or vulgar curiosity about their parentage you will be cut as dead as mutton, as you will also be if you curry favour unduly with the headmistress. Your only safe line is a false but becoming modesty and a simulation of grateful surprise when in due course one of the monitors introduces himself with the normal formalities. My earnest hope is that, having gone out of your way for nearly five years to cultivate the scum of Hampstead's kennels, you may at last strike up a permanent friendship with some dog of character and purpose.

It will save you a great deal of energy if you take my word for it that there is not a cat in Hertfordshire but has made a mental note to keep clear of your five acres; and it will save you from a disgrace which might well follow you through life if you remember that, although the hostel is conducted on co-educational principles, its governors set their faces against notions as incurably romantic as your own. If you are expelled for rakish goings-on, understand that I will not come home in order to explain them away.

As for the visit to Aunt Maud, I beg of you to score an initial point by not being sick in her car. You know how tidy she is; try to keep your face in a draught, which you have always found helpful. Your engaging but expensive habit of clawing ladders in ladies' stockings no longer worries me, for I have persuaded a reluctant Lloyds to give me

a policy covering all your social activities, and I suppose you may as well have a run for my premium; but I do think it would be tactful to lay off Aunt Maud's shins, even at the risk of appearing a little distant. You wrecked seven pairs of her best last year, and you admitted that was overdoing it.

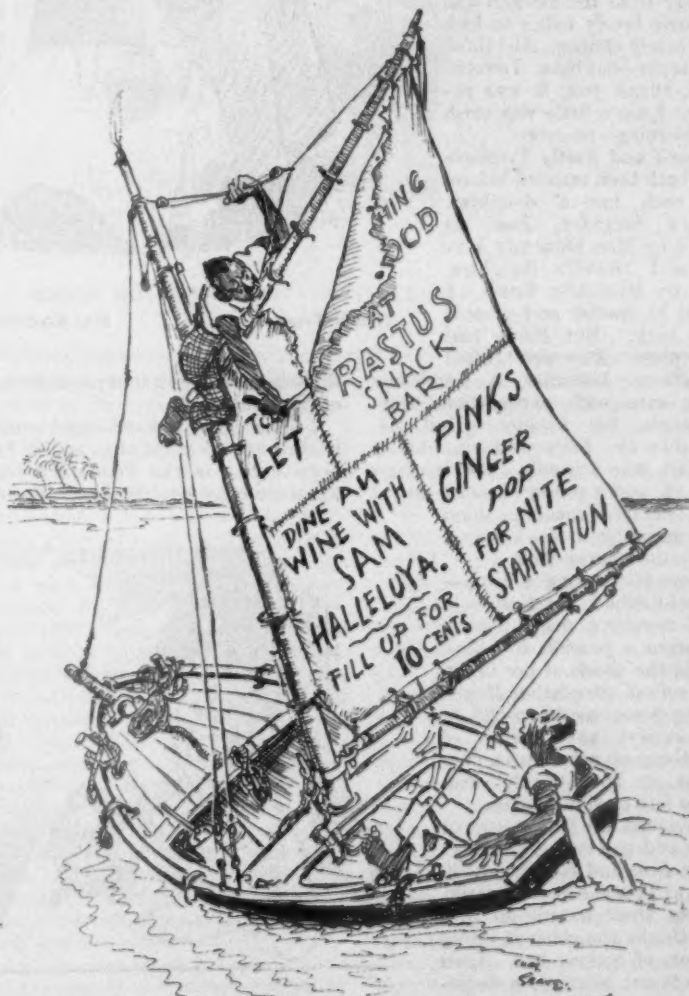
The question of Uncle Herbert inevitably crops up. He is now rising seventy-three, and to expect him to provide the sort of cabaret which I am sometimes good enough to put on for you at basket-time would be extremely inconsiderate in a guest. He grew very tired last year of your repeated demands that he should climb under the dining-room table and roar, and for what you did to his trousers on the one

occasion when he gave in I imagine you have a certain amount of leeway to make up.

And finally there is Aunt Maud's new pet, whom you have yet to meet. And here I am afraid I must refer again to the insularity which so limits your perceptions, for—I have thought it wiser to keep it from you until now—he is a *bouledogue de Bordeaux*. Make a big effort to forget that your ancestors (owing to their complete lack of initiative) hung about the same ridiculous village in Scotland for centuries, and do your best to overlook, if you possibly can, the unimportant circumstance that he shaves a trifle blue.

He is much bigger than you are.

ERIC.



"DIS FELLER AIN'T PAID ME NOTHIN' YET, SO AH GONNA LEARN 'IM."

At the Play

"SHE TOO WAS YOUNG"
(WYNDHAM'S)

THIS is one of those costume plays about a mother who wants to marry her daughter to money and doesn't much care what means she uses to that end. It is very good entertainment. Nothing that I may say later on should be allowed to obscure this cardinal fact. There are plenty of faults—but there is plenty of fun. There is love, irascibility, a little unhappiness (there is meant to be quite a lot of this but it doesn't all come over), comedy from the kitchen and of course lovely ladies to look at in lovely clothes. Ah! those little sauce-boat hats. I swoon.

No, thank you; it was nothing. I am a little vapourish this morning—no more.

Howell and Emily Treowain have both been married before, and each has a daughter. Emily's daughter, Rose, is played by Miss DOROTHY HYSON and Howell's daughter, Kate, by Miss ANN TODD. I longed to cherish and protect them both. But Emily had other plans. Rose was booked for Harry Lestrangle, a handsome young man with expectations from his uncle, Sir Eustace. Dull, dependable Dr. Evan Jones would do for Kate, who was only a stepdaughter after all, and a pretty vixenish one at that—though charming, mind you, charming; I won't have a word said against Kate.

There is of course a hitch—several hitches. Sir Eustace, a most repulsive man, himself conceives a passion for Rose, and in the shock of her indignant refusal (stepfather Howell adding some useful insults to the injury) any chance of something on account for poor Harry is irretrievably lost. Emily has to think again.

Obviously the first step must be to end the engagement between Rose and Harry (now in India). This she does by intercepting their letters, so that each thinks the other is jilting him or, of course, her. Then she sets out to cajole a dispirited Rose into accepting Dr. Jones, who has come into money. The doctor, though

anxious not to rush the girl, has no objection to this scheme. He has been in love with her—the kind of love that asks for nothing, or precious little—since the beginning of Act I. (Not that

may help to explain why Emily feels so strongly on the money question.

Act III. takes place on the day on which Rose is at last to marry Dr. Jones. But meanwhile, what of Kate?

Kate, I grieve very much to report, has up and married that loathsome Sir Eustace. Oh, Kate, Kate! Little did I think that you would squander your girlish beauty on such as he. Still, putting considerations of that kind aside, it is easy to see Kate's point. The old baronet is dead and she a wealthy widow before ever the curtain rises on the last Act. Moreover, she has brought Harry back from India and got herself engaged to him. She is a girl, you see, who gets what she wants. And nobody can blame her for that.

Still, was it wise, was it kind, was it right, to bring Harry along to the Treowains' house just when Emily was putting the final touches to Rose's wedding outfit? Possibly not (though Kate had had a lot to put up with, mind—I'm not blaming her), but it did produce a stirring last Act. And what was the upshot of it all? Did Rose go through with her marriage to the doctor? Did Kate keep Harry to his promise to marry her? Or was there, at

the eleventh hour, some ringing triumph of true love over a letter-burning mother's misguided schemes? The answer to these and other questions will be found at Wyndham's.

Through all these romantic alarms and excursions rushes Mr. EDMUND GWENN in the guise of choleric, scholarly, unbusiness-like Howell Treowain. Looking in the main like Mr. Pickwick, especially when he dances a jig, shooting out cynicisms about his wife's hypocritical manoeuvres like a more vigorous Mr. Bennett, and reminding one not a little, in the fury of his entrances and exits, of the old man in David Copperfield who ran in and out of his shop shouting "Goroo, goroo!", Mr. GWENN yet contrives to be about ninety per cent. EDMUND GWENN. He gets a lot of fun out of the part, and that is what he is there for. But he can hardly be said to lend an air of reality to the proceedings.

That the piece cannot be taken as seriously as perhaps



A PASSION FOR BOOKS

Howell Treowain MR. EDMUND GWENN

there is anything in that; so have most of the audience.)

I think perhaps that I ought to make it clear at this point that bailiffs have been sitting in the Treowain kitchen for some considerable time. The fact



THE WEDDING MORN

Rose MISS DOROTHY HYSON
Dr. Evan Jones MR. ALAN WEBB

the joint authors, HILDA VAUGHAN and LAURIER LISTER, wished, is due partly to a lack of depth in the acting, partly to a too rigid adherence to the precise speech of young ladies of the period (the 1870's). Whether in moments of real emotional stress these latter in fact retained all their wonted purity of grammar and diction I do not know. It is possible they may have done so. But in any case I am sure it is wrong to insist upon it on the stage, where dramatic effect is all-important and accuracy of detail a secondary consideration. How can "You do not understand," spoken with rounded lips and due attention paid to every syllable, sound like a cry wrung from a wounded heart? It is more like a sentence wrung from an English governess giving dictation.

As for the acting, Miss DOROTHY HYSOON does very well, but she is not of the calibre to suggest heartbreak, and the audience must be made to feel heartbreak if they are to appreciate the enormity of what *Emily Treowain* is doing. I am not sure either whether Miss MARIE NEY has really made up her mind about *Emily*. Is she just a mother who wants her daughter to make a "successful" marriage because she loves her and believes that money will ensure her happiness? Or is she quite heartless, quite selfish, and only anxious to get those bailiffs out of the kitchen? Is she, in other words, deceiving herself when in that passionate outburst at the end she declares that whatever she has done has been done only for *Rose's* happiness? I don't know. Her motives may have been mixed; but I think Miss NEY should have let us see at least which was uppermost.

Looking back and remembering that *Emily* was apparently more than willing to hand *Rose* over to that horrible baronet, I am forced to the conclusion that she really loved nobody but herself. But then I am prejudiced about *Rose*—and still more so about *Sir Eustace*. He gave me the creeps.

H. F. E.

"ALEXANDER" (MALVERN FESTIVAL)

LORD DUNSANY's *Alexander* came to Malvern with full complement of costume (Grecian at first, authentically Persian later), with the prostrate statue of XERXES, with Babylon burning, and a very, very high symbolic throne—the throne of Asia, far too high for the dying conqueror's failing steps to climb. It was all very refreshing, a breath of good, rich, stuffy, theatrical air, heavy with grease-paint, and very reviving amid the chaste contemporariness of this year's

Malvern playbill—for even *Saint Joan* in spite of its fifteenth-century décor is fundamentally contemporary.

A play, according to LORD DUNSANY (in the Malvern Festival Book), is a "piece of life in which events occur tremendously: take two or three whirlwinds among leaves, that is the way events should occur among characters in a play." That is the way they occurred to LORD DUNSANY's *Alexander* (MR. DONALD WOLFIT), though not perhaps to the real ALEXANDER, who produced, surely, his own events and was whirlwind to his own leaf. In this version it was the murder of *Clitus* (MR. DONALD ECCLES) which, undermining the conqueror by remorse and personal grief, brought him back from India to his doom at Babylon.

MR. WOLFIT did all that could be done for this unheroic hero who spent a lot of time sobbing on the floor, spurned by the tribal ambassadors of Asia, comforted for a moment by the Arab Ambassador (MR. NORMAN WOOLAND), who saw nothing to be so very upset about in the casual murder of a friend. But even the Arab wearied of the sobbing conqueror, who was eventually got on his feet by the *Queen*



"COULD YOU CALL BACK?—IT'S HARDLY WORTH BOTHERING ABOUT YET."

of the Amazons (MISS DAPHNE HEARD). Seating herself on the ground beside him, she gently laid his head upon her greave and invited him to return and conquer her. Nothing unfortunately came of this in the play.

It was the Coronation procession which revealed what the play really lacked. (By a curious pair of coincidences we had another coronation at Malvern—that at *Mrs. Beam's*; and also two spoof ends of the world—in *Geneva* and in *The Last Trump*). Coronations are nothing without a procession, and LORD DUNSANY gave us the *Earl Marshal* coaching the crowd in the way to behave when the procession should pass, but no procession.

The play needs a large theatre. It wants elephants, monkeys, slaves, captives, concubines, dancing-girls, tumblers, crowds of them—all the pomp, if not of Asia, at any rate of Drury Lane. And MR. WOLFIT, through no fault of his own, did not look like ALEXANDER, whose face is better known than that of most heroes. Nor, for that matter, did the Macedonians look like Macedonians, though in all probability the Macedonians never did.

Glamour Girl

I WANT to be a Glamour Girl, a Glamour Girl, a Glamour Girl,
 With Pep an' Personality an' Femmynine Alloor
 Like them 'Oolas—ain't they cheeky!—down at what's-its-
 name, Way-keeky;
 I've tried an' it's a failure an' I dunno why, I'm sure.
 I want to be a Glamour Girl—you know the kind I mean,
 What you wouldn't trust your boy with over 'alf a cup
 o' tea;
 I've tried with all me 'eart an' it's left me in the cart . . .
 'Ow can you be a Glamour Girl an' live a life like me?

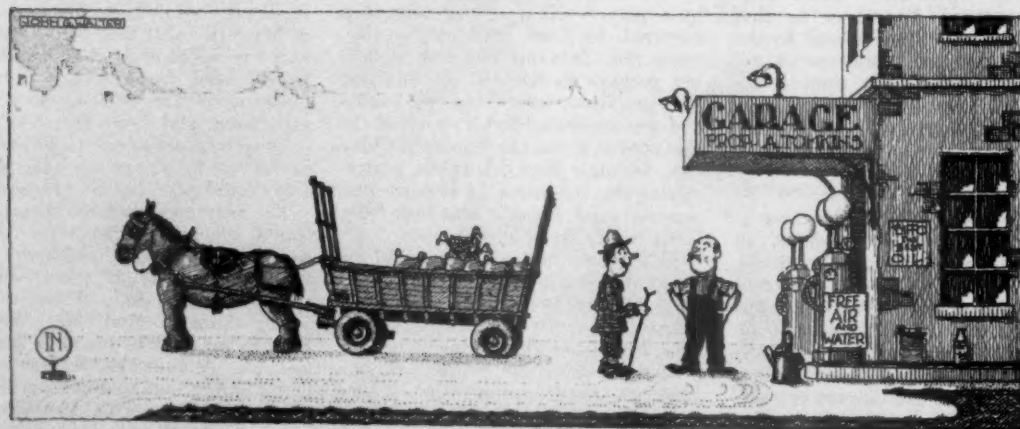
'Course I read the daily papers, I study the advertisements,
 Them Donts For Debutantys an' Aunt Bessie's Beauty
 Cult;
 But don't think you can fake up this Glamour game with
 make-up,
 For I've tried the bally lot of 'em—an' look at the result!
 I've followed all them picture bits what tell you where
 you're wrong,
 I know Why Joan Was Out Of It, 'Ow Mary Kept 'Er
 Youth,
 What 'Er Best Friends Wouldn't Tell—an' a 'ole lot more
 as well,
 But they're nixes when it comes to me an' that's the
 solemn truth.

'Ow can I be a Glamour Girl? Just look at Sunday's inci-
 dents;
 Bert took me on 'is tandem bike as far as Maiden'ead,
 An' 'ot! I fairly melted, an' then o' course it pelted
 An' I got there lookin' 'orrible an' wishin' I was dead;
 I'd a face like mother's washin'-day, an' oh! me poor old
 perm,
 An' me 'ikin'-shorts 'ad shrunk on me—oh, wasn't I a
 sight!
 An' Bert 'e got the pip, 'e says, "You're a Comic Strip!"
 An' you couldn't blame 'im neither, 'e was absolutely
 right.

Last month I went to Clacton for a fortnight for me 'olidays
 An' I met a boy from Birmingham what said, "You look
 a peach;
 If you feel the same as I do, what about a spot o' Lido?"
 So we sun-bathed all the mornin'—on our tummies—on
 the beach;
 Of course I'd put me stuff on—that there secret from Ha-wye,
 "Bronze Beautiful" it's called an' it should colour you
 a treat—
 But when I saw me back I could ha' cried, an' that's a fac';
 Bronze Beautiful be sugared—I was more like potted meat.

So I'd like to 'ave just 'alf-an-hour with all them Beauty
 Know-it-alls
 An' Donts-For-Debutantys; I'd say, "Come an' do your
 stuff
 The way I 'ave to do it—me an' Bert 'll put you through it—
 Cuttin' out the looxe an' comforts, trav'lin' cheap an'
 livin' rough;
 Let's see Aunt Bessie when she's pushed a bike to Maiden'ead
 Or played two hours o' rounders in 'er ordinary clo'es,
 An' let's see 'er once again after four hours in the train
 Standin' sardines in the gangway with 'er suit-case on
 'er toes."

I want to be a Glamour Girl, a Glamour Girl, a Glamour
 Girl,
 With charm an' fascination-like an' sex-appeal an' chick.
 I've been tryin' now for ages, but unless they raise me
 wages
 It looks like Little Lily can keep tryin' till she's sick.
 I ought to be a Glamour Girl—I'm made for it, I am—
 An' if I'd the time an' money it's a Glamour Girl I'd be;
 I should 'ave it in the bag, but—oh lor! the same old
 snag—
 'Ow can you be a Glamour Girl an' live a life like me?
 H. B.



"AY, SOME AIR IN THE BACK TYRE AND A BUCKET OF WATER FOR THE HOSE."

Letters from a Gunner

III

MY DEAR MOTHER,—I have now been transferred to the height-finding detachment. I observe in the official handbook that men with "at least second-class certificates of education" should be selected. Our battery commander is a man of discernment, but I must say I think the "second-class" just a little deflating.

Imagine us then, nearly a dozen recruits and one N.C.O. (a bombardier apparently named "Slugger"), proceeding happily down to the bye-pass for two hours' training. We have the less efficient of our two instruments (naturally the trained men snaffle the really good one, known as the U.B.7) and we are to take readings on artificial infinity, which in actual fact is a strip of lattice girder the same length as the height finder and set up some three hundred yards away from it. I might mention that our geometry and trigonometry is purely Euclidean. I can imagine EINSTEIN giving a hearty laugh at the notion of an artificial infinity, although, on thinking it over, are not all his infinities artificial, or is it every distance less than infinity that is quite unreal? I must get Father to explain. He was such a help over trigonometry when I was at school.

As I have said, the sun is shining gaily; on the horizon stands the Crystal Palace tower, on which we have already laid so often that I know every separate pane of glass, and there is the usual roar of frivolous civilian traffic along the bye-pass.

First set up the piece of girder three hundred yards away. At once a controversy breaks out as to whether the lamp-standards along the road are fifty or sixty yards apart. Sixty yards finally wins, with two dissentients; Bombardier Slugger, who is convinced they are planted purely by caprice and therefore no guide at all, and the Boy Killey, who has hastily run to the nearest and makes it 85 yards. He is ignored.

So a party of three take the girder some five lamp-standards away.

Actually they disappear out of sight, for the Bombardier has overlooked a slight bend in the road which at 300 yards puts them behind the hedge.

They too realise that and cross the road, coming into sight again, but intermittently only, because of the quantity of frivolous civilian traffic out for an evening drive. Finally an inquisitive driver stops near the girder and completely obscures it again, so we cross the road too.



"HOW MUCH IS 'I CAN'T COME—GOT SCARLET-FEVER'?"

Now only the eye-piece nearest the road is occasionally obscured by traffic, which is much better.

But though time passes, we must be certain about the 300 yards, and Bombardier Slugger produces a tape-measure. We divide into two large groups, one at either end of the tape, and set out for the girder.

All goes well until we are two-thirds of the way there. At that moment Bombardier Slugger suddenly realises that he has no idea what the markings on the tape-measure are. Are they inches or centimetres? Again the detachment is far from united. One school, small but very argumentative (I am one), argues that, as the tape-measure says "Made in Czecho-Slovakia," the divisions are clearly centimetres. The majority, British to the core, are unconvinced that centimetres exist, or if they do exist, that they have anything to do with measurement. Surely even a foreigner knows what an inch is? There is one dissident who advances the subtle argument that, as the plate "Made in Czecho-Slovakia" is in English, the tape was intended for the English market and is therefore in inches.

Finally we compromise on centi-

metres. It takes us a good time to convert them into yards, but we succeed and find that the original three have set up their girder exactly 302 yards away from the height finder. This is regarded as a triumph for all concerned. Roughly about an hour has passed, but we are now ready to start.

While this triumph is being celebrated we observe, 302 yards away, an officer ordering the two men left in charge of the instrument to move it into another position altogether.

Then it starts to rain.

So are we trained to become height-finders. Probably, like all real training, it concentrates first on the emotional qualities required, and clearly the quality first needed is patience.

Boy Killey, I am glad to say, does not regard the situation as hopeless. "It'll rain any'ow most days," he says. He is probably right.

Your loving son,
HAROLD.

"Last week-end the public were informed that there was a good service of buses to Ryelands during the evening, but the bad concert was in the afternoon."

Lancaster Paper.

So they waited.

Glamour Girl

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With Pep an' Personality an' Femmynine Alloor
Like them 'Oolaa—ain't they cheeky!—down at what's-its-
name, Way-keeky;

I've tried an' it's a failure an' I dunno why, I'm sure.
I want to be a Glamour Girl—you know the kind I mean,
What you wouldn't trust your boy with over 'alf a cup
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I've tried with all me 'eart an' it's left me in the cart . . .
'Ow can you be a Glamour Girl an' live a life like me?

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Them Donts For Debutantys an' Aunt Bessie's Beauty
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make-up,

For I've tried the bally lot of 'em—an' look at the result!
I've followed all them picture bits what tell you where
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I know Why Joan Was Out Of It, 'Ow Mary Kept 'Er
Youth,

What 'Er Best Friends Wouldn't Tell—an' a 'ole lot more
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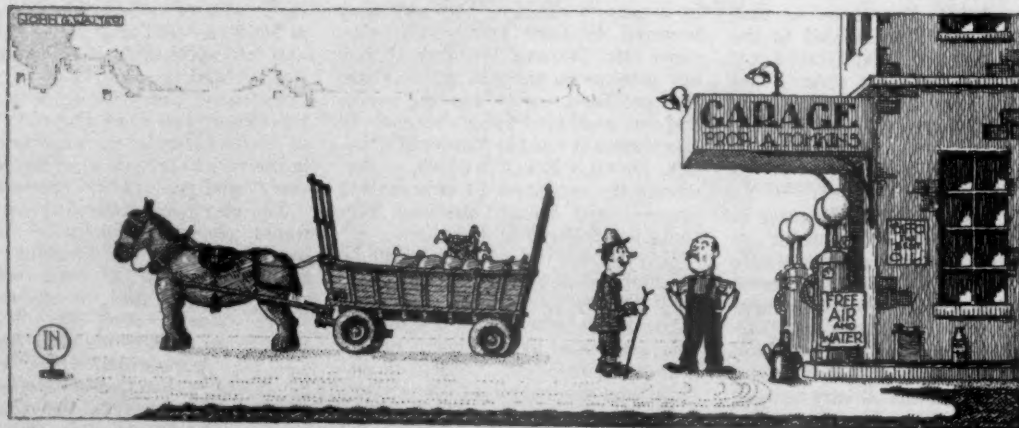
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All goes well until we are two-thirds of the way there. At that moment Bombardier Sluggar suddenly realises that he has no idea what the markings on the tape-measure are. Are they inches or centimetres? Again the detachment is far from united. One school, small but very argumentative (I am one), argues that, as the tape-measure says "Made in Czecho-Slovakia," the divisions are clearly centimetres. The majority, British to the core, are unconvinced that centimetres exist, or if they do exist, that they have anything to do with measurement. Surely even a foreigner knows what an inch is? There is one dissident who advances the subtle argument that, as the plate "Made in Czecho-Slovakia" is in English, the tape was intended for the English market and is therefore in inches.

Finally we compromise on centi-

metres. It takes us a good time to convert them into yards, but we succeed and find that the original three have set up their girder exactly 302 yards away from the height finder. This is regarded as a triumph for all concerned. Roughly about an hour has passed, but we are now ready to start.

While this triumph is being celebrated we observe, 302 yards away, an officer ordering the two men left in charge of the instrument to move it into another position altogether.

Then it starts to rain.

So are we trained to become height-finders. Probably, like all real training, it concentrates first on the emotional qualities required, and clearly the quality first needed is patience.

Boy Killey, I am glad to say, does not regard the situation as hopeless. "It'll rain any'ow most days," he says. He is probably right.

Your loving son,
HAROLD.

"Last week-end the public were informed that there was a good service of buses to Ryelands during the evening, but the bad concert was in the afternoon."

Lancaster Paper.

So they waited.

The Sorrow of Perle

If you should be in France during the holidays and you should feel any urge to have your hair cut, you ought certainly to go to Perle. Perle (he would be extremely annoyed if I spoke of him as common Monsieur Perle) does not, however, advertise, and as he has retired into obscurity quite deliberately it would be unkind of me to tell you where he can be found.

But if ever you get weary of the *Route Nationale* to Lyons and decide that a by-road in Touraine seems more

attractive; and if, in leaning over a bridge to admire a waterfall, your wife drops the map into the middle of the torrent, and if at six o'clock in the evening, discovering yourself in a small town still two hundred miles from Lyons, you decide to take your defeat gracefully and stay there for the night, you may possibly be in the neighbourhood of Perle's establishment.

That at least was how I found him, and you may as well have just as much trouble in doing it as I did. I was strolling along the main street before dinner trying to look as though I had gone there on purpose (which, I re-

flected afterwards, would have been an even sillier thing to do than getting there by accident) when I saw the window of Perle. It said quite simply

PERLE : COIFFEUR

and in the bottom corner a soiled printed card informed me that English was Spoken.

It seemed a shame, I thought, that Perle should have been squandering his linguistic achievements on a village visited in a year by probably not half-a-dozen Englishmen, of whom none was likely to expose his hair to the mercy of the local barber. So in a disinterested kindly spirit I went in and gave Perle an opportunity to speak his English.

He was a little man with a flowing moustache and a pointed nose, who was trying to sing (I believe) like TINO ROSSI, and he was accompanying himself on a strop with a razor.

"Good evening," I said. "I want my hair cut."

Perle stopped singing. He stopped stropping. A sudden peace fell on the shop. "M'sieur," Perle whispered incredulously, "is English?"

"Certainly," I said.

"Then please," Perle implored me eagerly, flicking his chair with his apron—"please sit."

I sat.

Perle walked all round me, like a man inspecting a strange animal at the Zoo. Finally he decided that the view of me which he liked best was the one from just behind my left ear, and it was from there that he pinioned me to the chair with a vast towel. "The weather," he remarked, snipping at vacancy with an angry pair of shears, "is good—no?"

I said it was.

"You make holiday—yes?" Perle inquired.

I agreed that I made holiday and felt that it was probably my turn to attack. "It's surprising," I said, "to find somebody who speaks English so well in so remote a town."

"Thank you," Perle purred. "Thanks, Sir. But I have not always been here. I was born here—yes. And"—he sounded very mournful—"I have come back to die. But in the between"—he brightened up considerably—"Perle has lived."

"I'm very pleased to hear it."

"I tell you, eh? And I tell you of the great sorrow which has sent me back here?"

"If you'd rather not—"

"I'd rather yes." Perle uprooted several hairs with a vicious comb. "When I am young, I live here. I become an apprentice to the barber of



"DO ANY OF YOU GENTLEMEN PLAY?"



"BUT IF YOU WEREN'T DRUNK, WHY HAD YOU CLIMBED A LAMP-POST?"

"I WAS UNDER THE IMPRESSION, SIR, THAT I WAS BEING CHASED BY AN ALLIGATOR."

the village—a kind old man, but not an artist. And I—I, M'sieur, I feel all the time my soul. I am, you see, a true artist."

"I'm sure you are."

"So I weary of the barber of the village, and one night when it is dark I take my scissors and flee to Tours. Then with my scissors I go to all the shops in Tours and say 'I am a young artist. Let me work with you.'"

"And did they?"

"Happily, a barber's assistant had just won a large sweepstake and gone mad. I took his place and soon people began to know my work. The *élite* of Tours come and sit beneath my scissors. I am within six months the best *coiffeur* of Tours. But already"—and Perle's voice dropped—"my great sorrow had started."

"A Parisian came to my chair one day. 'Perle,' he said when he rose—'Perle, there are not heads in Tours *assez illustres* for your hand. Come to Paris in the shop of my friend.'"

"So I go. And very soon one speaks of me everywhere. 'For your hair,'

they say to one another, 'go to Perle from Tours. He is the true artist.' All the time my sorrow grows. But my fame grows too and I do not realise how sorry I am. And I cut. And I cut. And the greatest heads of France come beneath me. Ministers, bishops, bicycle-riders, I cut them all.

"And when I have cut all the greatest heads of France I go to London and cut all the English heads too. But my sorrow, you see, M'sieur, is still with me. I am at the height of my glory. I am the finest *coiffeur* of Europe—the proudest bow their heads to the scissors of Perle. I am entreated to cut the heads of the greatest of America too."

"And did you go?"

"No, M'sieur, no. My sorrow is too big. I see that all is vanity. I have no illusions. So one night I throw my scissors into the Thames and I come back here. And I buy the shop where I first was an artist and with a cheap pair of scissors I cut the heads of the humblest—for, M'sieur, through my sorrow I am myself humble."

"And your sorrow," I asked tentatively, "was it—in love?"

"Ah, no, M'sieur! Perle's wife is most happy to be the wife of Perle."

"Then—"

"Can you not guess, M'sieur?"

"I'm afraid I can't," I admitted.

"But, M'sieur," he cried in anguish, "can you not see? All the greatest men of Europe may have their heads cut by Perle. Even the poorest beggar may have his head cut by Perle. But I—I, M'sieur, Perle himself!—I am the one man in the world whose head can never be cut by Perle!"

The Verdict

I FELL upon my knees and cried.

"Is there no hope?"

The great man shook his head and sighed

And murmured, "Nope.

Your poems are the worst I've read—Not worth the ink.

You'd better take to art instead, Or even drink."

DAVID
LANGDON

"HE KEEPS ON SAYING 'SCIENCE KNOWS NO FRONTIERS'
—AND HE HASN'T A PASSPORT."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Mozart Unveiled

THE second volume of *The Letters of Mozart*, translated by Miss EMILY ANDERSON (MACMILLAN, 18/-), covers the period 1777 to 1781. He left Salzburg in the former year for Mannheim, spent six months there, ten months in Paris, and then moved on to Munich. His father remained in Salzburg all through, but his mother accompanied him to Paris, where she died in July 1778. MOZART's letters to his father are long, moving and full of devout resignation. Yet in the letter giving particulars of his mother's illness and death he could "laugh heartily" at an anecdote of HAYDN's tipsy fit. This letter is also remarkable for a tremendous denunciation of Salzburg and his reasons for hating its "coarse, slovenly, dissolute Court musicians," who were at all points vastly inferior to those of Mannheim. Here he became intimate with the WEBER family, especially with ALOYSIA, whom he greatly admired as a singer, alluding to her as his "dearest friend." LEOPOLD MOZART viewed this friendship with distrust, as he did all relations which were not likely to be of service to his son's career. The only drawback to Mannheim was the Elector's lack of interest. That and his precarious financial position induced MOZART to try his luck in Paris, but the visit brought him no profit or success. His failure was due to lack of patrons and also his own listlessness. He composed little, and the only work of first-rate importance undertaken in this period was the opera

Idomeneo, commissioned by the Court of Munich and partly written in the autumn of 1780. The spectacle of outstanding genius hard put to it to make a living makes painful reading, and this volume will distress the thorough-going lovers of MOZART. For though she is admirable as a translator and annotator, Miss ANDERSON's relentless adherence to her process of de-expurgating MOZART's letters is a deadly antidote to idolatry. The strange dualism of angel and ape constantly recurs, and in his letters to his cousin, MARIA ANNA THEKLA MOZART, the ape runs riot.

American Melting-Pot

It takes apparently about three generations to turn "daggoes," "dumb Swedes" and "Heinies" into hundred-per-cent. Americans. They begin as European exiles, with daily papers in their own tongues, traditional food, ditto religions, and ideas—especially among the women—of thrift, hospitality and hard work inherited from older and austerer lands than God's own country. Then they become assimilated: how and how far is precisely and vivaciously described by Mr. WILLIAM SEABROOK in a reporter's tour, undertaken for the express purpose, of America's Swedes, Italians, Germans, Poles and Russians. *Americans All* (HARRAP, 8/6) describes real people under real names and puts family life before avocations. These last have a way of remaining hereditary: Italians, for instance, range from shoe-shining to Grand Opera and organised crime, while Germans persist as the best farmers and the least assimilable citizens. Certain towns favour certain races: Minneapolis runs to Norwegians, Chicago is the largest Polish city outside Poland. But whichever people is scrutinised the scrutiny is a genial and a kindly one; and the obvious trend and end of the book is to convince both the older and the newer American that their enrichment is mutual.

Toper's Progress

The resourceful ingenuity with which Mr. RICHARD BLAKER weaves a novel around a middle-class drunkard is unfortunately hardly justified by the result. *Love Went A-Riding* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) opens thriller-fashion with what looks like a cunning plan for crime or suicide laid by a widowed ex-schoolmaster in the absence of his sister-in-law and daughter. The only crime however envisaged by Kenneth Cresswell is the rapid absorption of four bottles of whisky; and though this procedure indefinitely continued undoubtedly points to suicide, the catastrophe is averted by the return of Aunt Kathie and Jill, the ministrations of a doctor (injections and a hair of the dog that bit you) and the



"FANCY MEETING YOU AGAIN, MISS JONES!"



AWFUL APPEARANCE OF A "WOPS" AT A PIC-NIC

John Leech, August 25th, 1849.

efficiency of a streamlined nurse as revolting in her "modern" way as *Jill* and as cleverly portrayed. The trouble with the subsequent redemption motif, and its conventional accompaniment of feminine devotion on the part of *Aunt Kathie*, is the materialism of its handling. As a soul one grants Mr. BLAKER's sodden protégé worth redeeming and possibly very interesting to see redeemed; as a body imbibing and vomiting (or not imbibing and vomiting) his appeal is necessarily limited.

Ship Aground

Vice-Admiral CAMPBELL, V.C., has dipped into the records of bygone naval disasters and their consequences for the stories of the five shipwrecks which he retells under the general title of *Abandon Ship* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6). He has chosen them, to quote his own introduction, "because, though not well known, they provide examples of courage, discipline, ingenuity, endurance, perseverance, and, best of all, humour, which are hard to equal." As a matter of fact two of his selections—the *Antelope*, remem-

bered in connection with Prince LEE BOO, whose grave is to be seen in Rotherhithe churchyard, and the *Litchfield*—can hardly be classed as "not well known," at any rate among those interested in nautical history. But they are tales which both bear a second telling, and Admiral CAMPBELL has been at pains to unearth from the records some new material with regard to them, especially to the *Litchfield*. The story of the "hoodoo" voyage, as it would now be called, of the *Alceste* in Eastern waters is by no means so familiar as those just referred to, and provides an effective contrast to the account which follows it of the loss of the *Proserpine* in the ice near Cuxhaven. The book furnishes a vivid demonstration of the fact that throughout its history the risks of war have been by no means the only ones for which the Senior Service has had to be constantly prepared, and it further contains a number of interesting reproductions of old naval prints.

The Money-Changers

MISS MARY MITCHELL's latest novel, *Meat for Mammon* (HEINEMANN, 7/6), might be condensed as a fable: Once

upon a time there were two sisters, and each was beautiful and each was rich. And when the time came for the elder to wed she married a poor man for love and went with him far from the city of Melbourne and lived in poverty and bare him twin sons. But the younger sister married a rich man and lived at ease with him and bare him one fair son. . . . Now if Miss MITCHELL had allowed the fable to persist according to tradition, *Luce*, the elder sister, would have increased in grace, and her sister *Sal* would have deteriorated, allowing her son to be nurtured on the milk of unkindness. However, the author shatters the fable and shows a querulous *Luce* and a gracious *Sal*, even though the latter's son does develop in the expected manner. The author has produced a grave quiet book and one that we may be grateful for in these days of forced brilliancy. It is all very well done, and the characters of the two sisters, their parents and husbands, are true to life. Can there be a better compliment?

The Instone Chronicle

The purchase of an ex-Army aeroplane to expedite the despatch of business papers from England to the Continent by a firm of colliery and shipowners at Cardiff was the beginning of the present Imperial Airways Service. In *Early Birds* (WESTERN MAIL AND ECHO, 6/-) Captain ALFRED INSTONE tells the story concisely of how his first experiment developed into the Instone Air Line Company and later, by merging with the three later competing companies, became the amalgamation of to-day. There is, frankly, a good deal of air-propaganda in the book; this is to be expected. The long fight for subsidies, either direct or indirect, the uphill struggle against well-aided Continental airlines, and the unflinching optimism of all concerned, from the Instone directors to the humblest employee, are well described. The book, however, while of wide interest as a record of nineteen post-War years of civil air transport, will appeal mostly to those concerned with Croydon Aerodrome. The figures of efficiency and safety given are certainly reassuring. There are some interesting photographs and a delightful story retold of the wealthy American (who had never piloted a machine before) taking his plane alone from Paris to Croydon.

Strong Meat and Strong Measures

The hero of Miss NORAH LOFTS' novel, *Out of this Nettle* (GOLLANCZ, 8/6), is a sixteen-year-old Scottish boy who, having helped a Jacobite to escape during "The '45," fled

to the coast, took passage in a trader, was captured by Portuguese pirates and sold by them to a slave-owner in the West Indies. He spent ten years in slavery, and then, war between England and France giving him the chance of escape, went to Virginia, where he had strange adventures as a tobacco-planter before returning to Scotland to rebuild his father's ruined home. Miss LOFTS has great imagination, a thrilling story to tell and a vivid style of writing—much too vivid in some of her accounts of brutalities and amatory affairs. In fact, in some places she seems to mistake grossness for power, with the result that her book will suit neither the mealy-mouthed nor the ordinarily squeamish. One cannot help feeling how magnificently "R. L. S." would have handled the same material. Yet there is a certain splendour about the book in places, and the author undoubtedly writes very well.

Records Worth Recording

Messrs. STANLEY PAUL claim that *My Cricketing Life* (3/6), by Mr. DON BRADMAN, is the great batsman's "only up-to-date autobiography," and everyone who reads it will find it a most informing and illuminating book. Young and ambitious cricketers will see how assiduously Mr. BRADMAN practised before he reached what may reasonably be called perfection, and they will also do well to notice that although no mock modesty finds a place in these pages there is also neither sign nor symptom of swollen-headedness. Mr. BRADMAN is always generous too in praise of other great cricketers. Hear what he says of W. R. HAMMOND. "There is no batsman quite like Wally; he is a law unto himself, never dull and often quite majestic. I should say that he is the finest all-round player in the game at present." For several reasons

this little volume, with its half-dozen photographs of the author, can be warmly recommended.

Mr. Punch On Tour

At Middlesbrough, from September 3rd to October 1st, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern *Punch* Artists will be on view at the Municipal Art Gallery, Dunning Road. The Exhibition will be shown later at Nottingham.

Invitations to visit the Exhibition at either of these places will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, *Punch* Office, 10, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.



"TWO DEVONSHIRE TEAS, PLEASE."
"INDIA OR CHINA, MADAM?"

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Charivaria

A CORRESPONDENT says he can't understand how the tanned muscular girl of the beach can transform herself into the clinging, ethereal and entirely feminine figure of the evening. Well, it's all done by mirrors.

★ ★ ★

"There's no breakfast in the world that Shirley Temple couldn't have."

Food Advertisement.

She jolly well can't have ours.

★ ★ ★

A commercial traveller says he always sleeps better in Hants and Wilts than in Herts or Bucks. All who are interested in humour will regret that he makes no mention of Beds.

★ ★ ★

"A dark-haired man who decides to leave off shaving is often amazed to find that he is growing a ginger beard," says a barber. He should, however, comfort himself with the thought that it is probably much better out of the system.

★ ★ ★

One Paris doctor has challenged another to a duel. It has been suggested that instead of using the customary pistols they prescribe for each other.

★ ★ ★

Scientists declare that there is no real connecting link between the animal and vegetable kingdoms. They seem to have overlooked Irish stew.

★ ★ ★

A sports goods manufacturer has produced "an everlasting croquet mallet." This is great news for people who object to croquet mallets wearing out.

★ ★ ★

Move Along, Sneeze.

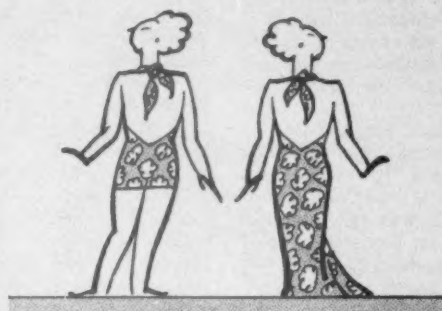
"They should realise that it was as easy to get rid of blackmail as of a cold in the head. They had only to go to the police."

Report in Daily Paper.

★ ★ ★

A curious feature of Mr. SYDNEY WOODERSON's record-breaking half-mile run was that, unlike Mr. CORRIGAN and the *Queen Mary*, he meant to do it.

VOL. CXCX



An ichthyologist says that a bottle-nosed shark has no commercial value. What, nothing on the bottle?

★ ★ ★

What the Book Said

"In view of the fact that Hutton is out of practice, I would field the following team: . . ."—*Daily Mail* "summing-up of Test prospects, Aug. 20th.

★ ★ ★

A centenarian ascribes the secret of his long life to the fact that he has always eaten an onion every day. He doesn't state how he managed to keep his secret.

★ ★ ★

An institution announces that it is now compelled to buy its bedding on the instalment system. In fact, so much down and the rest tick.

★ ★ ★

A pacifist admits that he has a private tutor for his children so that they will not hear about the Great War. But surely they must sometimes wonder what all this peace is about?

★ ★ ★

"When you go for a cruise make sure that you have two of everything," says a ladies' paper. Just as Noah did.

★ ★ ★

A reporter says he finds raincoats and mackintoshes being worn daily. This is said to be a sign of a severe summer.

★ ★ ★

We read of a very rare complaint that gives a person the impression that his joints are much bigger than they really are. Our butcher suffers from it.

★ ★ ★

"RICHARD ARLEN IN
NO TIME TO MARRY U. EXCEPT SUNDAY."
Cinema Poster at Horsham.

These film stars must be busier than we thought.

★ ★ ★

"4ft. Yodeller," says a headline.
Condensed milkman, presumably.



The Story of the Play

"LOOK," the reporter said patiently. "All I want is the story. Just a bare outline of the story. It won't take long, and then I'll leave you alone. What's wrong with that?"

Hands on knees, the thick-set man sat as still as a toad. "No," he announced. He made an emphatic gesture and replaced his hand on his knee. "Story, no. We," he went on carefully, "are sssspecial."

"Sssspecial," echoed the young woman who stood at his side with an air of being about to leave the floor suddenly. (She had practised giving this impression. It was an asset.)

Two well-built young men were in the background playing cards on an upturned box. It was very doubtful whether they knew what was going on, but at this point they both looked up at the reporter, nodded together, and looked down again. "Ssssnap," said one in a low voice.

The reporter put a cigarette in his mouth and was fumbling for a match when a small thin man in a cloth cap appeared from behind some scenery flats and murmured "No smoking, please," before almost immediately disappearing again.

"Hey!" cried the reporter, leaping after him. The man put his head round the edge of some wooden foliage and assumed an inquiring look.

"Maybe you can tell me what this play is about?" suggested the reporter.

The little man replied "Oh, no," and withdrew like a snail's eye.

The reporter cast his bent cigarette to the dusty boards, took a deep breath and began, "Is there nobody in this house of doom capable of explaining to me——"

Mr. Kibitzer emerged from the shadows and interrupted kindly, "Why don't you go round in front and see the play, boy?"

"Because," replied the reporter, "I haven't got time. I've got to get this into a feature page, not a news page. Nor can I afford to wait for your miserable publicity man to get back from his tea or whatever unheard-of meal he is now in the process of consuming. And look," he added, suddenly grasping Mr. Kibitzer's coat, "why is it, tell me why it is that this quartet of knobbly Thespians can't tell me anything at all about the play? They're in the damn thing,

aren't they? Don't they know what they're up to? Is it a secret? We haven't had a memo. from the War Office asking that no reference should be made——"

"Didn't you ever hear of the Dazzlebokos?"

"Well, even though they are acrobats that's no reason why they shouldn't know what part they play in the story, and if they know what part they play in the story, blow me, they must have some idea of the story!" said the reporter plaintively.

"They don't play any part to speak of in the story," Mr. Kibitzer said. "It's a speciality act. They go home after it. All they do on the stage is arrange themselves in a pyramid and such, to entertain the guests at Lady Whassname's dinner-party."

"No characterisation at all?"

"You can't get much into a pyramid," Mr. Kibitzer very reasonably pointed out. "They tell me it's a strain just to keep your face straight, let alone put any expression on it. Boy, you can't expect them to know——"

The reporter brought a crumpled typewritten sheet out of his pocket and indignantly thrust it before Mr. Kibitzer. "That's the best your regrettable publicity man can do," he declared, running a finger down the page. "Blah-blah, blah, blah—the story of a girl's love. The story of a girl's love! What kind of talk is that? Our readers would be thunderstruck to learn that there was any other kind of story. Give me some details," he implored. "Something I can write about."

Mr. Kibitzer obliged. "When the curtain goes up," he said, "Millie, a young girl, is discovered sprinkling cocoa-powder on the top of some junket——"

"For heaven's sake," interrupted the reporter. "I said details, not hemstitching. Who is this Millie?"

"She's a daughter or something," Mr. Kibitzer said doubtfully. "She wants to marry this feller Lord Whassname, and she can't owing to the weather."

"Owing to the what?"

"The weather. Her father's will, or his mother's will—there's several wills knocking about in this show, it's a lawyer's paradise—takes away all his money, or all hers, whichever it is, if the marriage comes off when the sun isn't shining."

"Sounds crazy to me," said the reporter.

"It's a play," Mr. Kibitzer explained.

"Makes a new twist, I suppose, but it's crazy all the same. Is the whole play crazy? Do people laugh?"

"They tell me it's full of wit and humour," said Mr. Kibitzer cautiously.

"Suffering dogfish, I know what that means," the reporter commented. "Still, he's a new writer, isn't he? So maybe it isn't so bad——"

Mr. Kibitzer looked round. The Dazzlebokos were pre-occupied and no one else was visible. "You mustn't print this," he said, "but it isn't a new writer. That's just one of those pseudonyms. It's really H. J. Stoopid, the novelist. He doesn't want it known."

"What!" cried the reporter, beaming. "Dear old H. J., my favourite author? But this is news of the utmost significance. This lets me out. Now I don't have to write a word about this addleheaded play. We shall ignore it as we have ignored all dear old H. J.'s work ever since that beautiful day nine years ago when he had a brawl in the subs' room with our respected editor. They'll fill the space with a picture of some legs, and who am I to say them nay?"

"You needn't tell them who it's by," said Mr. Kibitzer glumly.

"I know I needn't," said the reporter, skirting the Dazzlebokos on his way to the phone, "but my word, I shall."

R. M.



"WON'T IT EVER BE 'YEIGH'?"



THE KINDLY FRUITS OF THE EARTH

[It is suggested that many countries may take advantage of the World's bumper wheat harvest to build up emergency reserves of grain.]



"NOW REMEMBER, JOHN, YOU'RE NOT TO GO OUTSIDE TERRITORIAL WATERS."

Letters to Officialdom

XXII.—Re Cyclists

To the Secretary, The Ubiquitous Cyclists' Union, 3, Saddle Street, Strand, London, W.C.2.

DEAR SIR,—As one who, having been a motorist for many years, has been inclined unsympathetically towards the cyclists' point of view, may I request you to encourage cyclists (whether members of the U.C.U. or not) against the measures which officialdom is seeking to impose upon them for their benefit? I make this plea because, while on holiday at Blight-on-Sea, I had to manage for a time without my car and used a bicycle instead. Thereby I was enabled to appreciate and even understand the attitude that cyclists generally adopt towards us selfish motorists.

I do not think—nor do I think that you will think—and let me add in passing that I think my wife and daughter also do not think—that "selfish" is too strong a word to use. We all hired bicycles and so were able quite impartially and independently to form this view. For instance, one day we were riding side by side along the promenade and talking to each other as we rode. Conceive of our annoy-

ance when a motorist kept tooting at us from behind. He must have seen we were in conversation by the way we looked at one another when we spoke. And as for passing us—which I presume was what he wished to do, although my wife believes his purpose was to irritate and interrupt us in that aggravating way that motorists have—he certainly could not have done so without risk to us and cars approaching on the other side. We should have had to ride within a foot or two of one another—faster too to obviate the tendency one has to wobble several feet to either side when one is cycling at a walking pace.

Refusing therefore to be flurried by his importunity, we cycled quietly on along the promenade, and when at last he tried to pass and hit another car head-on we did what many drivers probably would not have even thought of doing. *We took no notice*, scorning both to add our presence to his sad discomfiture and to betray, as others did, a morbid interest in the sorry wreckage of both cars. Yet I suppose that some would say that we, by riding three abreast, were actually to blame for what occurred.

Of course my sudden wobble to the right as he was passing us may have conduced to his collision with the other car. I did this to avoid my wife, who

swerved in order to avoid my daughter, who in her turn swerved because she had a heavy shopping-basket on her handlebars. It is very difficult to steer with anything depending from the handlebars, and motorists should be informed of this and asked to take especial care when passing bicyclists with baskets on their handlebars.

This driver erred no doubt, as many drivers err, in thinking that a motorist has more right to the highway than a bicyclist, forgetful of the fact that bicyclists (but not those living now-days), or rather bicycles (but not the kind we see to-day) were on the highway (when the highway also was not what it is to-day) long before cars were ever even known. And this I think (though also true of elephants) is quite sufficient argument for cyclists to employ when hectoring by the motoring fraternity. I'm glad to say that every cyclist I have met has always used this argument. It is ridiculous for motorists to retort that carriages (but not the kind we see to-day) were on the road before the first-known bicycles. Suppose that cyclists argued in this way? A pretty lot of nincompoops they would appear!

In fact it is high time that someone put the cyclists' case more forcibly, and I think I am the type of man to do

it. I should like to be known as the Cyclists' Friend in an age when everyone favours the motorist and no one the cyclist. It is always the cyclist's fault, they say. Whatever the nature of the accident, the cyclist always has to pay. I can recall only one instance, which happened recently at Blight-on-Sea, when cyclists met with justice. Perhaps you read about it in the papers? A party of thirty or forty cyclists were riding without lights at dusk all over the road with their heads down and came into collision with another party of thirty or forty cyclists who were riding without lights all over the road with their heads down. They were all thrown off their machines and there was a general mêlée.

Well, I suppose that in nine cases out of ten people would say it was the cyclists' fault. But the magistrate at Blight-on-Sea very fairly decided that the unfortunate young fellows must have been dazzled by the lights of a car which had just turned the corner a mile down the road. He gave judgment against the driver of the car, and I am pleased to say that the next day the local newspapers gave prominence to his decision and published a picture of him on his own bicycle, which he has ridden now for over twenty years.

"While I detest and abominate motor-cars," he said in an interview, "I am not prejudiced against them." And when asked if he considered it safe for other users of the road to let tender infants and old men with uncertain limbs, poor sight and failing confidence ride bicycles, he said, "Of course. Why not? I do"—and, promptly mounting, rode away with dignity, without a glance to left or right, across the busiest thoroughfare in Blight-on-Sea. Such men as this, I think, are only to be found among enthusiastic cyclists.

You may use this letter in any way you please.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—It would be a telling argument for cyclists if they were to draw attention to the fact that bicycles were on the road before cars.

The Bus

"My idea," said Tokewhistle, "is not to determine beforehand to walk any given number of miles in a day, but to do just what we feel like. To-day, for instance, I suggest that we make for Amblechester, where there is quite a good hotel with a billiard-table. Amblechester is about thirty miles from here, but I don't suppose we shall

want to do more than fifteen. When we are tired we can just sit down by the side of the road and wait for a bus."

"I suppose you are quite sure," I said, "that there are buses on this road?"

"Absolutely certain," said Tokewhistle confidently. "I was motoring in these parts last year and the roads were simply infested with buses. I remember thinking what a pity it was, because there is something very urban about an omnibus, particularly a red one, and they spoil the countryside. One is motoring along thinking that the scene is probably little changed since the days of Hereward the Wake and suddenly a great red bus comes round the corner and spoils it all."

"I don't suppose they had these electric grid-irons or whatever they call them stretching across the fields in Hereward's time," I said.

We had done about ten miles and I was beginning to feel that walking was not quite all it is cracked up to be when it suddenly occurred to me that no buses had passed us.

"You can't expect them to flash by at the rate of two a minute like they do in London," said Tokewhistle rather shortly. He explained that he was not feeling tired, but that one of his shoes pinched him. It was impossible that he could feel tired, because in his younger days he would have thought nothing of doing thirty or forty miles in a day.

"Let's sit down and wait for a bus," I said.

We sat down and nibbled some sandwiches, and presently a lady rode by on a very tall old-fashioned bicycle. We asked her when we could get a bus,

and she said that there were no buses on this particular bit of road, but we would get one at the cross-roads just five miles further along.

Tokewhistle's shoe pinched him more and more as we proceeded, and he began to limp badly. He said it was really very amusing because anybody who did not know him would think he was footsore. Personally I felt grand except that I seemed to have grown a few extra bones at the back of my knees which got in the way when I tried to put one foot in front of the other.

"These happy-go-lucky walking tours with no fixed route are the best," said Tokewhistle after a bit. "There is an element of delightful unexpectedness about them."

When we reached the cross-roads we sat down and waited for about two hours. An occasional car flashed by and covered us with dust, and presently a man on a horse cantered up and Tokewhistle asked him what time the bus went for Amblechester. He grinned.

"It's the wrong Friday," he said. "The Amblechester bus only goes the second and fourth Fridays, and this is the third. But there's the Stourcastle bus due in about twenty minutes, if that's any good to you."

As we whirled along in the bus on our way to Stourcastle I couldn't help remarking rather acidly to Tokewhistle that he was quite right: there was an element of delightful unexpectedness about these unplanned walking-tours. Who would have dreamed when we left Stourcastle that morning that we should end up at Stourcastle again in the evening!



The Beauties of Bridge

IV.—On Bridge Manners

BRIDGE is as much—dispute it if you will—
A school of manners as a game of skill.
Behaviour's oil should grease the Contract wheel,
And no game so betrays the hairy heel.
Some show such faults as in all games you'll meet,
Crow when they win or whimper in defeat;
Others make errors found in Bridge alone,
A field with snares and pitfalls all its own.

Some play'rs through lack of quickness fall from grace,
Rabbits who vex us by their tortoise pace;
Some through their Bridge at varying speeds will
go,
Now madly fast, now maddeningly slow.
Worse than the quickfire gangster is the snail
Who hems and potters on till all goes stale.
When such frown o'er the cards with tortured brain
And, one hour later, shut the hand again,



"IS THIS THE THIRD TURNING ON THE RIGHT, OFFICER?"

One longs to cry, all courtesy forgot,
"For God's sake play some card, no matter what!"
So Tom, that slow loquacious friend of mine,
When asked to dinner quite forgets to dine.
The fellow-guests, a glumly listening group,
Starve as he stirs the still untasted soup.

Those thugs of language I would gladly hang
Who taint good Contract with vile germs of slang,
Call spades "spaduncles," diamonds "sparklers" dub,
And cry at last, like *Hamlet*, "There's the 'Rub.'"
For "vulnerable"—quite an honest word—
They've adjectives as senseless as absurd,
Like "pregnant"—which a septic word I'll call,
Or "septic"—pregnant with no sense at all.
Never for "game" say "gambo"; such a term,
Though Purley snigger, will make Oxford squirm.

Cliché with some's a bugbear all their days;
They can't resist the pert bromidic phrase.
We all wait Edward's hackneyed quip with dread,
Till "Where d' we go for honey now?" asks Ted.

Some Bridge historians, lingering on the past,
When playing one hand still discuss the last.
By such dead issues fuddled and appalled
One soon forgets what suit one's partner called.

When the game's dead some partners misbehave
And, parson-like, preach sermons o'er the grave.
A brief post-mortem may at times have use;
For the long inquest there's no just excuse.
By games once finished let a fool be vexed,
A wise man wipes the slate and starts the next.
Some ghouls replay each trick, must every time
Fish out the corpse and reconstruct the crime,
Dissect dead hands and bare their partners' shame—
Grim Bernard Spilsburys of the Contract game.

Many at Bridge to superstition tend;
'Tis here that ladies will most oft offend.
When cards go ill they're up and in a trice
Run round their chairs like female waltzing mice.
Such will believe, nor count the notion strange,
That bad luck changes if your chair you change.
Round they revolve, as restless as a midge;
Musical Chairs for them's a form of Bridge.
My friend Macfie, who played not long ago
With such fond females, dropped a happy *mot*.
As they swop chairs he mournfully repeats,
"Play, leddies, wi' your-r hahnds an' naught your-r
seats!"

To quit your table is as much a sign
Of rudeness when you play as when you dine.
Dummy should watch when not required to toil,
Tied to the table as the serf to soil.
Yet some show interest only when they play,
Their cards are handcuffs; free them, they're away!
How often in some houses will you see
Three play'rs await their dummy absentee!
There stands the green baize table all arrayed
And the dealt hands in comely order laid.
What is he doing? Whither has he gone?
The clock ticks glumly while the friends wait on.
Soon through the awkward silence break the strains
Of gushing waters or of angry chains;
Along the hall belated footsteps run,
And the flushed truant asks which side has won.

Familiar Occasions

"Yes, dear, of course you can help me. That's what I asked you to come up for. The first thing, the very *first* thing to do is to decide whether it's going to rain or not. The Rector says *Yes*, and Uncle Egbert says *No*, and I feel it may, or again it may *not*. Anyhow, Miss Dodge and Miss Plum, who've been helping all the morning—(so kind, only your uncle isn't pleased about the bran-tub because bran always gets all over the garden in the most extraordinary way)—well, Miss Dodge and Miss Plum, who've been helping all the morning, have definitely put up their stalls in the garden. So that settles it."

"Then what would you like me to do, Aunt?"

"A thousand things, dear. Just let me think."

"Certainly, Aunt. Shall I try to sort out the jumble?"

"No, darling, not on any account. Besides, it isn't jumble. It's the Bargain Stall. I shouldn't like Lady Flagge to think that all those nice feather boas and the blue parasol and her old red mantle that one knows so well, were to be called *jumble*. Dear, if you won't mind my asking you, would you just sit still and *do absolutely nothing* while I think?"

"Certainly, Aunt. Shall I——?"

"Get up at *once*, dear! You were almost sitting down on the produce, and poor Miss Plum took such trouble over those jam-sponges. No, dear, of course they're not going to stay behind the sofa cushions. I just put them there for safety. Now, not another word while I *think*. Is that the telephone?"

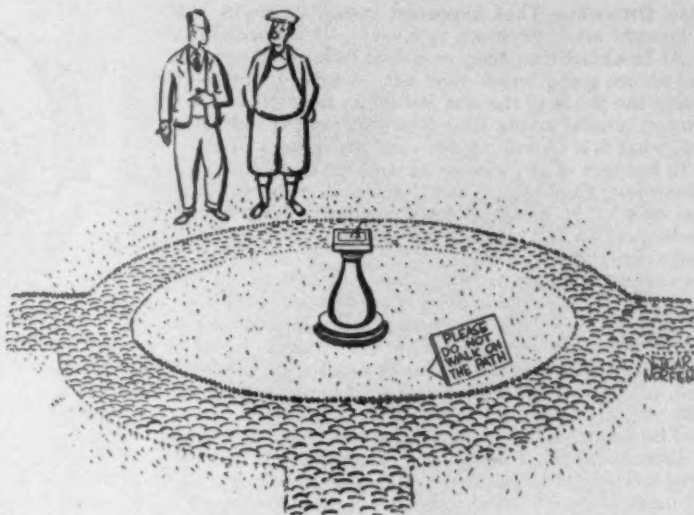
"No, Aunt; it's just the canary."

"Dear, that is *not* funny, particularly when you remember poor little Dicky that I was so fond of at Brighton eight years ago. . . . Just answer it for me, and I can't speak to *anybody* unless it's Miss Dodge or Miss Plum or the Rectory. Unless it's the ice-cream."

"It's not the ice-cream. It's the Post Office asking if you'd like three dozen baskets on sale-or-return, and whether you think it's going to rain."

"The Rector says not, but Uncle Egbert feels sure it will. The baskets must come down with the cups and saucers and poor old Chissell and the little epileptic grand-daughter. That will be too delightful. Anything else, dear?"

"They just want to know if it will be all right to run a guessing competition, as if so, somebody called



"MY HENS HAVE BEEN LAYING EXTREMELY WELL."

Mrs. Custerbright will take charge of it."

"She can't. I want her for the tea, and she distinctly said she was willing to do the buttering, and she'll just have to stick to it. Ask if they've got a rope for the tug-of-war yet."

"No, Aunt, they haven't; but somebody called Old Hook knows where he can borrow one, and he's going to see somebody called Young Hook about it at dinner-time."

"Ah, that would be the Hooks. Yes. Now, dear, if you won't mind my saying so, do put down that telephone and remember that we haven't got very much time, and there's a great deal to do still, even though Miss Dodge and Miss Plum have been helping all the morning, and the asthmatic Miss Dodge would have been here too but for her hay-fever, poor thing. However, she's been making lavender-bags and paper-flowers instead."

"I'm afraid, Aunt, there's somebody at the door. Shall I see what it is?"

"I can't see anybody at all unless it's the Rector, or some of the stall-holders, or the ice-cream, or one of the helpers. And we really ought to pin the prices on to all these clothes. Well, dear, was it the tea-things or the tent for the fortune-teller?"

"It was somebody called Miss Flick, and she wanted to know if you'd take tickets for a raffle, the winner to pay

a penny, otherwise the police come down on you."

"Nonsense, dear, they wouldn't dream of doing such a thing. The raffle is your Uncle Egbert's mother's Dresden-china figures. It would really be very odd if they came back into the little garden-room cupboard again, after all, so I think I won't take tickets just now, perhaps."

"She wants to know whether you think it's going to rain, Aunt."

"Tell her that the Rector *definitely* says it isn't, but Uncle Egbert isn't at all sure. Perhaps I'd better tell her myself. . . . Dear, what are you doing?"

"Only trying to price some of the jumble—I mean the parasols and the feather boas, Aunt."

"Well, if you're sure you know how. What have you priced that black net tunic with the sequins at?"

"Well, Aunt, it's rather an unusual size, isn't it, and the sequins are falling about all over the place, and I'm afraid the holes look rather like moth, so I've just put ninapence."

"Very well, dear. It can always be reduced after six o'clock."

"I hate to tell you, Aunt, but I'm afraid it's raining."

"Your Uncle Egbert *said* it would. Now, dear, if you'll just run out and bring in all the things; we can always take them out again if it clears up."

E. M. D.

Lucy Lends a Hand

DEAR GEORGE,—What happened yesterday might well have brought my honeymoon to a very . It happened like this. At breakfast time Lucy said dont look round now but goings on are going on on your left. I turned as though admiring the death of the late Nelson on the wall and saw a fellow at a table saying Elsie Elsie you are fair shredding me up, what is it oh tell me do? and this Elsie who was a built to last sort of girl was saying nothing in a nasty way. What is young Cupid up to now Lucy said, using poisoned arrows or what? Nature is very wonderful Lucy I said, let us leave it be and push off unto these yellow sands the immortal bard wrote of.

We were sitting on them when this fellow comes up and says oh what a unprintable noun of a life it is. Come come Lucy said, life may be a unprintable noun but you didnt ought to use such language before me. Pardon he said, ladies first but we let it fall flat and he said my tether is at an end, to day it is do or die only I dont know what to do. Kindly unfold I said.

Well he said, this Elsie you saw me with is my betrothed from Palmers Green, I am from Walham ditto, I met her at a red meeting and it seemed a true case of workers of the world unite but we left the reds after a time and joined a rambling club which seemed much the same thing only we got out in the open air more. I proposed in the Devils Punchbowl and she accepted on the Hogsback so you see it was quite a romance. But he said, when this holiday was all but impending she fell for a sort of amateur Bing Crosby who is a decontaminator and is poisoning her against me, she only came away with me because she had already paid me for her ticket and now my life is as bitter as beer once was as this usurper lives next me and in the event of a flare up I shall be decontaminated by the very snake in the grass who has stole my girl, it irks somewhat.

Perk up Lucy said, it maynt happen, I for one believe



BUTCHERS' OUNCES

civilisation will go on being civilised if not more so. Civilisation? he said, it is a exploded fallacy. What sort of civilisation do you mean I said, wearing trousers thinking thoughts or being head country? The whole perishing issue he said, its so dead that Queen Anne is frisky compared to it. If thats so Lucy said, I think its the nicest funeral I have ever participated in and hope to enjoy same for many years. Believe it or not he said, you will never live to see the end of your life. Speaking per pro self Lucy said, or not.

Rome went to pot the same way as what we are doing he said, because so many suchansuch women put their spokes in, even imperial Caesar turned to clay in their hands, women? you can keep them. Kindly observe the decencies please I said. Not only women finished Rome he said, baths became over rife and weakened one and all. My dear Sir I said, pipe down do, us plumbers wreck nothing and even if we do we replace as found, also now we have Sunday to recover from Saturday, everyone knows people offered to save Rome but it declined and fell. He started talking to himself but the conversation sank very low so Lucy said Ill leave you to enjoy yourselves, oh revoor.

I read the paper but it was full of items like deceased gent in sack police suspect foul play, child swallows own leg, Hitler says and you, not to mention todays wireless programme so I said my friend I leave you pro tem ere grief masters me.

I was some time gone due to misjudging when they opened, when I came back Lucy and this fellow were talking in bathing costumes and this Elsie sitting aloof looking into next week. Now for a swim Lucy said and swam. Your wife is one of the best he said. Why the one of? I said, she could never be re duplicated again. Suddenly he said do not perturb yourself but I fancy your wife is getting rather drowned and there was Lucy waving her arms and shouting save me do in a quiet refined way. Being already costumed he said, I will effect a rescue. I didnt want Lucy saved by any Tom Dick and or Harry so proceeded to remove shoes and in so doing trod on a gentlemen's hand who was sitting there with another gentleman. Please he said, do not tread on my hand if you can help it. Shes foundering I said pointing. That good looker? he said, come Herbert our day has dawned. My wife I said. Oh he said, finish your cigarette first Herbert, shes married. I said a few hurried words viz clipped them and his ear and dove in.

This fellow was almost up to Lucy but just as he was about to grasp her he got cramp and subsided. Hurry



"It's EERIE, ISN'T IT, DURING THE LONG SUMMER DAYS?"



"Oh, DO GO ON TELLING US ABOUT DEPORTMENT."

William Lucy said, I am now going down for the fourth or fifth time and did so. I brought her out and round and a crowd of people said bravo it is nice to think in these days a husband will go to the trouble of saving his wife and someone gave Lucy some brandy which I had because she said she would rather have an ice later.

Well the crowd had just unbunched when we saw this Elsie running amok shouting bring my little precious in and there was this fellow bobbing up and down by the jetty. A gentleman in a boat towed him in and said is this yours Madam? I thought at first it was a basking shark but us fishermen are used to disappointments, good day Madam. Oh Beowulf Elsie said, speak to me while I wring you out. Where am I? he said. Here she said, this is me speaking, you were nearly drowned. I couldnt of drowned he said, going down for the third time my life flashed before me and the bit with you in was so nice I said encore and saw the whole show through again, I could of kept bobbing up and down until the tide ebbed out. They kissed and he said I am the happiest man living and she said yes but we will soon be wed and everyone said oh very touching, come children lunch.

Lucy I said, you being all but drowned seems to have amalgamated them better than what Cupid did. You cant expect a little boy to know everything she said, every cloud is silver lined but sometimes one has to turn it inside out oneself doesnt she? Lucy I said, what has befallen?

Well she said, when I came back this fellow said I think my only chance with Elsie now is to make myself a hero will you oblige by sham drowning and letting me save you? so I said yes. But he didnt I said. No Lucy said, I thought

well if anyone is going to be a hero my William can be it. But he would of saved you if he hadnt got cramp I said. Well Lucy said, my intuition suddenly told me this Elsie is the mothering type and not the hero worshipper so when I saw him drawing nigh I remembered all he said about women and plumbers and just let him see civilisation has still got a kick in it. Oh Lucy oh Lucy oh Lucy I said and could say no more.

Well George us men may know where to draw the line but whats the use if the women wont toe it? I hope you are well and am

Your affect, friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Lucy has just promised to be upright downright and straightforward so I am hoping she will be on the level in future.

Boating by Night

WE'd watched the final flutter of the sun
That waved and wilted like a peacock's tail;
We'd seen the circuit of the moon begun—
Seen the dark river pierced and turned all pale.
The black unfathomable banks
Housed a quiet consonance of sound,
And rushes in their dim demented ranks
Danced though they didn't leave the ground.
The water squirmed and made the moon an antic
That dived among the mirrored willows gaily,
And all agreed it would have been romantic
If only George had brought his ukulele.

A Wet Occasion

EVEN a village can be up to date in the matter of physical fitness, and our local Council have now completed their plan for widening the stream at the bottom of the recreation ground and making a bathing-pool.

Most of the folk in these parts are not interested in water in larger quantities than a kettleful at a time, so, after the Councillors had fitted a second-hand turnstile and hung mirrors advertising shaving-soap in the ladies' dressing-rooms they decided to celebrate the opening with a Water Carnival and Procession in order to call attention to the benefits of public bathing.

The procession formed on the village green and in the bar of the "Three Swans," and attracted a large crowd of children and a small flock of sheep.

At the last minute several members of the band found that they could not walk and play at the same time, so they had to be given the hay-cart in which the Water-Nymphs were to have travelled.

Behind the band came a party of little girls in dresses supplied by a tooth-paste company. Two private cars and the station taxi carried the councillors and their wives. The taxi was clearly not used to such a slow rate of travel, and the Girl Guides, who were marching behind bearing a may-pole and their tea-basket, had a most exhausting time.

Behind the Guides came a very tired horse dragging a small portion of the

Atlantic Ocean neatly tucked into a coal-cart. In the middle of the sea sat the butcher's daughter dressed as Britannia and looking very self-conscious on her sugar-box.

Finally came the tableau which should have been in the hay-cart. I was its central figure as "The Spirit of the Pool," attended by an assortment of water-fairies. No vehicle could be found, so we just had to walk. I had no objection to playing the part in the partial privacy of a hay-cart, but I still think that a water-nymph in thick walking-shoes surrounded by fairies carrying their spare clothes in brown-paper parcels looked rather ridiculous and made a poor climax to a brave show.

When the procession arrived, Britannia, leaning perilously over the edge, struck the water with her trident and declared the Pool open. It was in fact extremely open, and the winds from every quarter had made a special effort to attend. This was rather hard on those entrants for the Beauty Parade whose wind-resistance was not equal to their glamour, but the contest was an outstanding success. One amateur photographer, in his anxiety to get a close-up of the winner, got so far along the greasy pole that he was awarded a prize.

King Neptune caused a stir by refusing to mount his throne because he did not think that the raft was safe, but it was Alfred the Great who got into the greatest difficulty. He was due to launch the first British Navy between tea and the high-diving display. The Danes, with whom he was booked to do battle, duly appeared at the

shallow end, but one of Alfred's men put his foot through the bottom of the canvas canoe which formed the basis of our infant navy, and the tableau had to be abandoned in favour of an exhibition of life-saving. Alfred himself, hampered as he was by several yards of sacking and a harp, did some noble work. Luckily the Danes proved to be friendly after all, and they dragged the King and his men to safety.

The programme had to be kept up to time in spite of the naval disaster, and the wet men of Wessex had hardly left the water before a party of Pilgrim Fathers boarded a punt which had been fitted with masts and re-named *The Mayflower*. The famous ship looked rather low on its Plimsoll line when it sailed from under the diving-board, but it carried the Pilgrims safely to America, where they landed amidst the cheers of the people in the sixpenny seats, who were there already.

I was nearly frozen when at last I put aside my thick coat and mounted the raft for the final scene. Dressed in an inadequate costume of green and yellow butter muslin and a bunch of imitation seaweed, I crouched behind four aspidistras and a heap of bracken while several Girl Guides as water-lilies and mermaids did their best to tip me off. When the raft came to anchor I cast off my water-weeds and rose as gracefully as the heaving island would allow. I had to recite a poem by the curate, but just as I had got myself nicely balanced the Scoutmaster swam into view wearing a large green head-dress and towing three rubber tyres. He was impersonating the Loch Ness monster and should have appeared much earlier in the programme. I clutched my flimsy drapery about me with both hands and began to say my piece. I had only got as far as "Out of the wild wet waves I come" when it became evident that the front half of the monster was suffering from cramp. His cries sent my mermaids and water-lilies swimming in all directions. A man in the front seats threw in the brand-new lifebelt, rope and all. It caught my raft broadside on, set it pitching badly, and then sank.

The designers had intended that my costume should be kept dry. I made a frantic effort to retain my balance, but there was nothing at which to clutch. The raft pitched again at the end of its rope. My foot caught in an aspidistra pot which was shifting to starboard and I took a header right through the last coil of the Loch Ness monster.

The bandmaster mistook the shouting for his final cue and struck up "Land of Hope and Glory," but there was no land in sight for me.



"It's ~~very~~ BEAUTIFUL, BUT I DON'T LIKE IT."



"PLEASE, MISTER BODGER, FATHER SAYS WHAT FIGURES DOES 'E 'AVE TO DIAL TO CALL THE FIRE BRIGADE?"

Holiday Tasks

L—Punctuation

No mind should long be wholly idle. Let us, as we lie on the beach or float on the waves, or wait for our loved one, the grouse, the tide or the trout, try to perfect our punctuation.

* * * * *

Do you make the faintest pretence, Bobby, that you know anything at all about punctuation? Or you, Elizabeth? No.

We do not wonder. We do not blame you. In all our protracted and expensive education we cannot remember that anyone made any attempt to teach us punctuation. It was supposed to come naturally to an English gentleman. It doesn't. We are not, we think, very good at it now. But we do *try*.

But the ghastly thing is, Bobby, that we do not believe that you *care* about punctuation.

We want you to care about punctuation so much.

You must be stop-conscious.

* * * * *

You think that punctuation is a comical game for printers and pedagogues. You read the works of the Hobo School perhaps, and you think it is tough and virile to write like this:

"I take that guy's rod and I take his

dame, he never stirred after I gave him the works, she blubbered a little but I shot her in the stomach next day was Tuesday, when I move into Connecticut the first guy I lamp is that guy's brother, God always has a come-back they say, that night did it rain, I'll say it rained that night, he was the kind of guy a guy might shoot any time without thinking much of it, and I shot that guy through the liver not because he was the other guy's brother but just because he was that guy and it was raining then I called Lou on the long-distance."

You think that that is a terse, graphic and efficient style, cutting out all flummery and superfluity. And you write your own letter thus:

"DEAR GRANNY, thankyou for the tuckbox, it is very hot, will you send me some money please there was a match yesterday we were beaten, nothing else has happened I think don't forget about the money from your loving BOBBY."

Well, you are wrong. The style is inefficient. It is not even clear.

But still you are not even *pretending* to be interested in punctuation.

If I talk about motor-cars you will be interested, I know.

Well, imagine a motor-driver (it is not difficult) who puts out his hand and makes the same vague twiddle when he means "Slow down," "Pass

me," "I am turning to the right," and "Stop!" (For illustrations, see that great work, *You Have Been Warned!*) You would not say that he was terse, graphic or businesslike. You would say he was a poor and inefficient fish.

But the fellow who uses no stop but a comma, and uses that wrongly, is no better than the ambiguous driver—except that he can't kill anybody.

Let us take another picture from the motor-world.

Consider again our old enemy the full stop at the end of a heading, whom we have almost driven out of public life. He survives now only in Parliamentary Bills and papers, and even there the Treasury is "consulting the authorities."

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury was asked to have this pest exterminated "in the interests of economy and good printing."

In a courteous answer he said: "Modern printing practice is to avoid unnecessary full-stops in displayed headings and there are none in ordinary Government publications, including Command Papers. *The standing instructions are to omit them.*"

So there at last the great principle is accepted and proclaimed by His Britannic Majesty's Government, no less!

But the Treasury continued:

"It is a matter of taste or fashion rather than of 'good' or 'bad' printing, and the saving by the omission is too infinitesimal to be calculable."

We will not say a word about "too infinitesimal," except, Bobby, that you must not—But no, not a word.

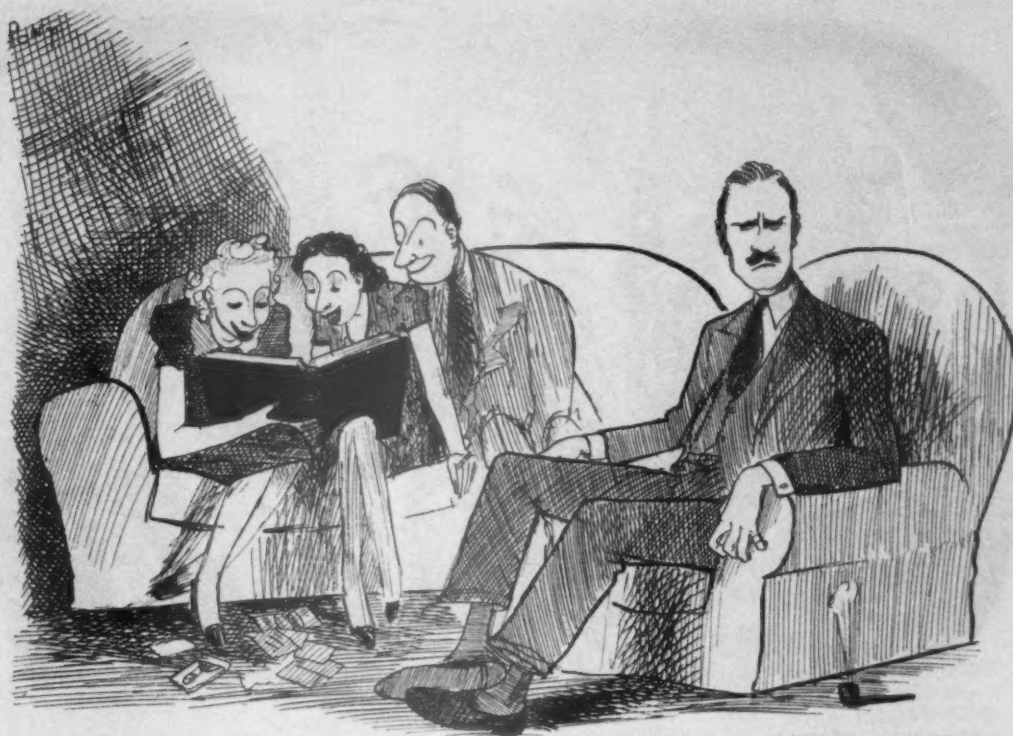
We must respectfully quarrel about "good" or "bad." And this will bring us back to the main stream of our lecture. Observe a policeman on point duty. Suppose that every time he stopped or released the traffic, in addition to raising or lowering his arm, he took his whistle from his pocket and solemnly blew it.

That unnecessary adornment of a simple deed would in every case cause a small waste of time, and, through the earlier exhaustion of the policeman, of public money. These effects might be "too infinitesimal" for calculation, but the raging motorists would not care about that. Nor would they accept the explanation that it was a question of taste or fashion. They would say (rightly) that the practice was uneconomical and inefficient, and therefore "bad." They would think it was a small point but one worth worrying about.

And now perhaps you will condescend to pay a little attention to punctuation.



"WE'RE GOING TO HAVE PEEP-SHOWS, COCONUT-SHIES, AUNT SALLIES AND THE DUCHES OF MORCHESTER."



"AND HERE'S ONE OF HIM TAKEN AT EASTBOURNE WHEN HE WAS FIVE."

(1) *The Full Stop*

Consider first the fine, fat, final full stop (which in the trade they call a "full point" or "period"). He ends a sentence. He completes one thought and fences it from the next. He is *not* required at the end of a heading, for that is an isolated ejaculation and, being followed or preceded by nothing, cannot therefore suffer collision with anything.

Here, Bobby, are three delightful full stops:—

"Fear God. Honour the King. Pray without ceasing."

Your talented hobo will write:

"Fear God, honour the King, pray without ceasing."

Is it so good?

Others might write:

"Fear God; honour the King; pray without ceasing."

Is *that* so good, do you think, Bobby? Has not some of the thunder gone? Are not the three trumpets muted a little?

Very well, then. We agree that full stops matter.

But if upon a banner you blazon one

of these injunctions only it should be

FEAR GOD

Why, then, you say, are full points printed after the despicable initials at the end of this lecture? Because they are initials, first letters only; and the full point is also used to mark an abbreviation or contraction. "A." stands for Albert, "Jan." for January, and "oz." for ounce, and "Geo." for George.

There are some teasing little customs here. You must write "Yorks.", they say, and "Berks." But "Hants" has no full point, "because it is not a modern abbreviation" (*Rules for Compositors and Readers*—HORACE HART).

The innumerable postscripts to your letters should be marked thus—PS., and not P.S. as is your custom. On the other hand, having written to your sailor brother, you must address the letter to H.M.S. *Beetle*, not HMS. *Beetle*, nor H.M.S., *Beetle*, nor even H.M.;S. *Beetle*.

1st, 2nd and 3rd, they say, do not require full points, for they are symbols, not contractions. But so, surely, are cwt. and lb., which *must* have the full point. I do not follow this; but no more

now. Next week another thrilling lecture on the comma, the semi-colon, and, if there is time, the alarming colon.

A. P. H.

Fugitive

I HEAR the tramp of the approaching enemy. Will they discover where I lie hid? I press deeper into the surrounding undergrowth. I hear their voices whispering above my head, and then, O gods of my fathers! I feel their dread weapons tearing at my sides. I cling desperately to the ground, but I am unarmed and defenceless and they are strong. I am torn relentlessly from my hiding-place amid cries of triumph. But what of my beloved children, my offspring, my seed that I have hidden away from those remorseless eyes? I cry out to them, and joyfully I hear their answering voices: "Father, we are here, unharmed. We will avenge you!" And as I am borne to my final resting-place I am comforted in the knowledge that the name of Chickweed will live again in the place where it has flourished since time began.

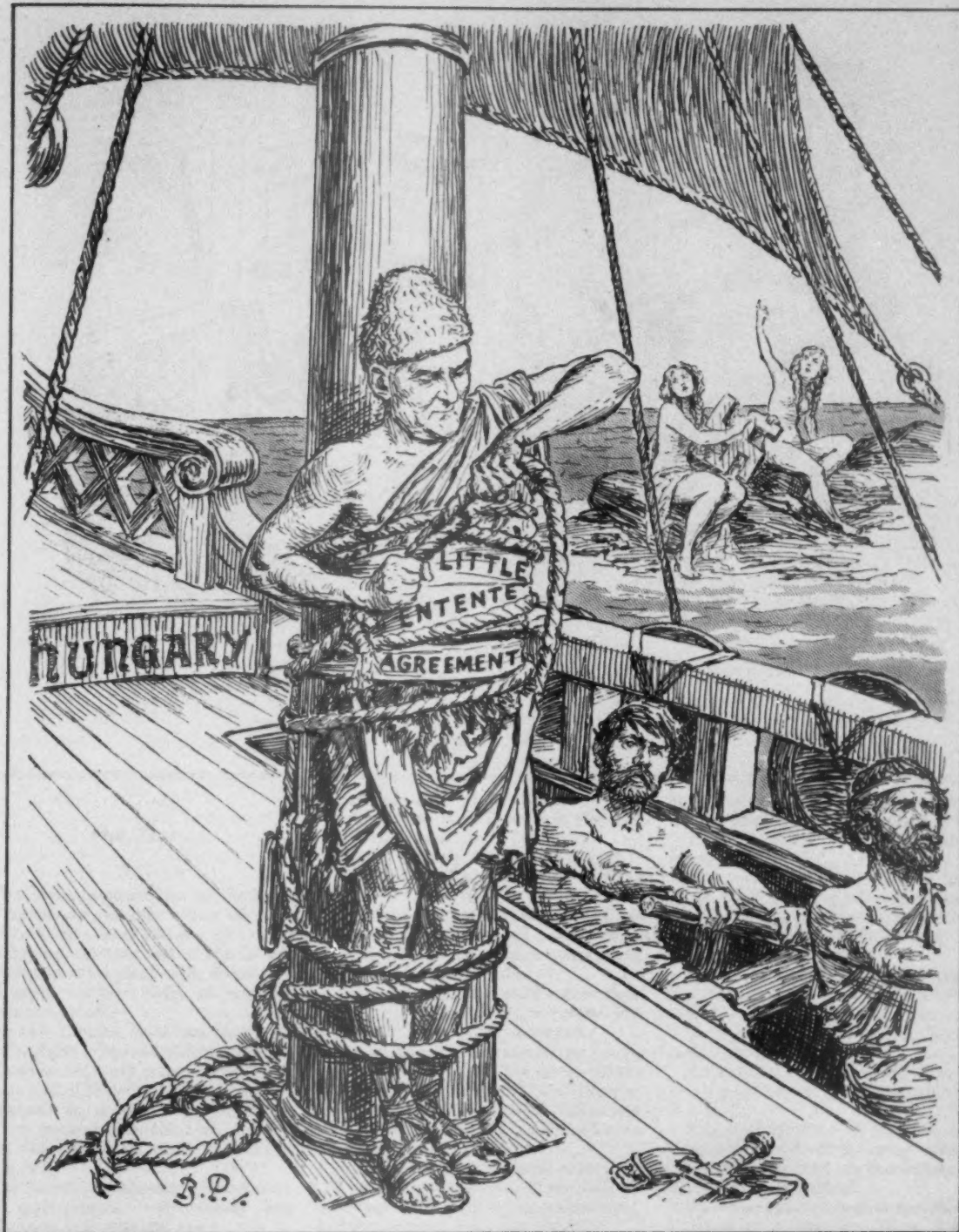


"WHY, YES. I FEEL CERTAIN I'VE SEEN MISS CARTER BEFORE—SOMEWHERE."

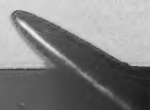
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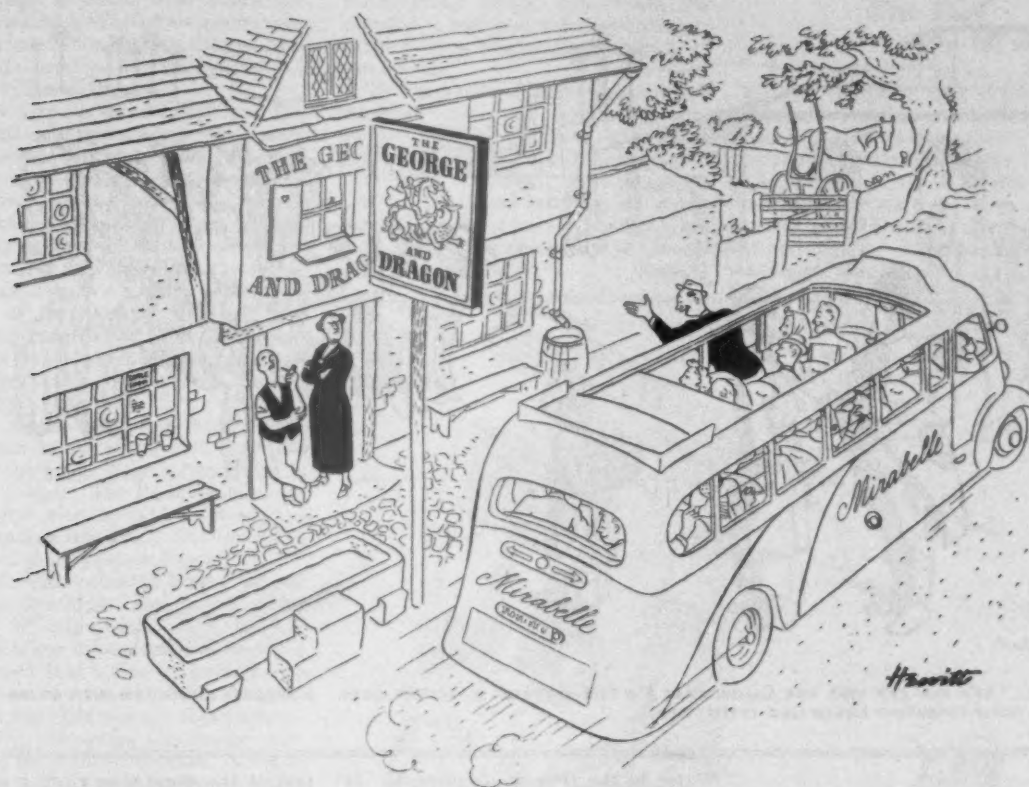
THE clamour of the Press must keep
 If I'm to start my stuff at nine,
 Not until nightfall dare I peep
 And find if it was wet or fine.
 Not until nightfall can I know
 Who has been born or is lamented,
 How fast the hush-hush bombers go
 Or when the wind-sock was invented.
 I dare not find which facial cream
 Will bring one closer to the boys
 Or who in Rome now reigns supreme—
 The Pope or Mr. Alfred Noyes.
 My calling roots me to my spot
 Screened from wise words on clutchless cars
 And whether to divorce or not
 Or what according to the stars.
 Not yet may I be edified
 By Transfer Books and Outward Mails,
 By agony all classified
 And the quiet tenor of Home Rails.
 I am well sheltered from advice
 On how and when and why to bet
 And whether William Powell eats rice
 Or only jelly off the set;

Far from the odd untimely ends
 That other people's people die
 And the catholicon that lends
 Enchantment to the bleary eye.
 On agitated alien heads
 Castles and Cabinets may rain,
 Blacks may be slowly ousting reds,
 Mauves may be coming in again—
 I know it not, my mind is free
 From oceans conquered by mistake,
 And no upheaval heaves up me
 Or wakes me if I'm not awake.
 "Slim, blonde and fashionably dressed
 Earl's nephew's second cousin wed
 In swimming-bath to paying guest"
 Lies firmly folded and unread.
 Blithely I leave affairs of state
 Untouched except by marmalade,
 While Woodersons must stand and wait
 And Europe reels without my aid.
 Tonsils may subjugate a king,
 Bishops lash out at painted lips,
 But I am blind to everything
 Except, of course, my seven comic strips.



HORTHY AND THE SIRENS





"GOOD EVENING, GEORGE!"

The Day

THE faces opposite me in the train are peculiarly horrible. Four of them are practically imbecile and the other two belong to criminals of the lowest type—men who steal milk from cats and tread on the chalk of crippled pavement-artists.

At the London terminus I nearly have a fight with the ticket-collector because he says my season is defaced. I reply that if they used decent ink and cardboard it wouldn't get defaced. We are separated in the nick of time by a lady with an umbrella and a string-bag.

The streets of London are infested with pickpockets. Everybody has shifty eyes and criminal jaws.

I buy a paper to read in the bus and there is no news at all. It seems remarkable that with so many criminals about there should not be one decent murder. Hitler and Mussolini have made no

speeches, and Rain Stopped Play yesterday before it started in the only important matches.

Nobody interesting is even dead.

The smell of burning rubber from the office below the one where I work is much stronger than usual, and I am almost overpowered as I enter. Why should a firm of soap-importers be constantly burning rubber?

My secretary has a redder nose than usual. She always has a red nose, but this morning it is like a tomato.

Other people's secretaries to whom nature has accorded red noses adopt methods of art to bleach them. Powder and what-not. Why must my secretary alone of all secretaries have a red nose that looks like a red nose?

My office chair is as hard as iron.

I demand a cushion. There are no cushions. I try the telephone directory, but it is harder than the chair.

There are fish in the inkwell.

I dial a number and get a shrieking noise long before I have finished dialling, which always seems grossly unfair. To get a shrieking noise when I

have finished dialling gives me pain, but at least one has had one's fling.

I dial O, and O is engaged, which is impossible.

The top of the desk is dusty, and I make black finger-marks on a lease.

The india-rubber is damp, and the black finger-marks become long, like bananas.

I ring for Grudge, the office-boy. I feel the need to swear at somebody and only Grudge will stand for it.

Grudge is away in camp and Mivvins comes in his place.

Impossible to swear at Mivvins. He wears pince-nez and has an uncle who is a lord.

I dismiss Mivvins. I lock the door. I phone through to the outer office to say I am going through the letters and must not be disturbed.

I put two chairs together and use the wastepaper-basket for a pillow. I go to sleep.

I am always like this on my first day back after the holidays. Next year on the first day back at the office I shall stay at home.



"AND YOU CAN TELL THE CALIPH THAT I'M NOT ALLOWED TO ACCEPT GIFTS. I SUGGEST HE SHOULD GIVE THESE TO SOME DESERVING CHARITABLE INSTITUTION."

Le Feu (The Fire)

It began in the cottage of Père Rascasse, who had been in such a hurry to get out to the fishing-ground that he had been injudicious with the small oil-stove on which he warmed his morning coffee. His brown sail was only a dot beyond the estuary by the time the Veuve Merlan, getting her own breakfast, observed her neighbour's curtains to be ominously ablaze.

The cottages, three of them under one roof, stood back a couple of hundred yards from the village quay. Père Rascasse had lived the whole of his life in the first, alone since the death of his parents. The Veuve Merlan, of whom it was said by some that her husband had been oyster-opener to the Shah of Persia and by others that he had never existed at all, had lived in the second for at least a quarter of a century. The third has been empty so long that Père Rascasse had taken to stowing the gear from his boat in it, sending the notary in the town an occasional brace of lobsters to preserve a suitable understanding.

Short of the obvious advantages of arson, the fire could not have done

better in the time at its disposal. It licked its way quickly round the kitchen, taking a good grip of an oak dresser, and, given sturdy help by an open bottle of paraffin, surged into the bedroom and was already hard at work on the roof-timbers when the Veuve Merlan noticed it.

Having established the fact that Père Rascasse was either suffocated or not at home, her first thought was for the village *Pompriers*. Naturally, for no loyaller body of men existed throughout the length and breadth of Finistère, and though they had not been called out officially since the winter of 1923, they were careful to keep their *esprit de corps* untarnished by means of an annual practice, followed by an annual supper, followed, as they were the first to admit, by an annual headache. An excitable woman always, and never quite dressed, she dived up the village street calling upon them as loudly as she was able.

The Chef des *Pompriers* was luckily at home. He had taken over the Helmet of office in 1924 and had grown into a sadly disappointed man, embittered by fourteen years in which even the village chimneys had refused to ignite; within ten seconds he was out of his cottage, blowing on a tin horn

and at the same time ringing a large handbell, the Helmet well over his face. It took the *Pompriers* a few minutes to gather from the boats, from their potato-patches and from a number of odd jobs. When they assembled one of them had got inside a Minor Helmet, not so fine a hat as the Chef's and carrying a much lighter load of verdigris; his fellows wore an air of the utmost determination. After some minutes spent in searching for the key of the fire-engine shed, an adjutant remembered that the shed had never been locked after the last annual practice, and the engine was at last hauled out. It looked like an early ice-cream barrow on which an inventor had been trying out his heavier metallurgical whims.

The Chef then addressed his men.

"Fellow *Pompriers*," he said simply, "we have been called upon to carry out our stern duty. It is one from which I am certain we will not shrink." He was interrupted by a cheer not only from the *Pompriers* but from the whole village. "As yet the extent of the danger is unknown, but for myself I have little doubt it will turn out to be a formidable conflagration." There was a further cheer, in which all took part except the Veuve. "For all we

know we may this morning be about to engage in deeds with which fire-fighting circles will ring for generations. It will not be for nothing that we have trained ourselves for this proud moment with a diligence—"

This time the interruption was final—a loud splintering crash which could only be the dissolution of Père Rascasse's roof. Words were abandoned for action. Led by their Chef, who was brandishing a hatchet and, less explicably, a large oil-lantern, the Pompiers swept bravely round the corner and pulled up in a cloud of dust at the scene of the drama. Things were burning beautifully. Père Rascasse's cottage was a relic of the past, and half the Veuve Merlan's was beyond recovery.

The engine proved to have a deep cupboard in its stern, and here was coiled the hose, an immense cobra in yellow rubber. The Pompiers dragged it out, but, alas! to the least instructed eye it was clearly dead. The cobra had perished some years earlier.

At this vital point the Mayor stepped into the limelight. Reinforced by his plaque of office, for which he had slipped home, he contributed the able suggestion that a line of buckets was now the only hope. Like all great leaders, the Chef was not above accepting a tip. Mounting the engine carefully at its point of balance, so far as anything so fantastically irregular could be said to possess one, he urged the villagers, as they loved the Veuve Merlan, to bring out their receptacles and form themselves into a human chain leading to the quay.

This bold plan succeeded. Between the ages of three and ninety the village sprang to it. Buckets, and not only buckets, were passed valiantly from hand to hand until at length the fire was killed. Drowned in its mad career by half the water in the harbour, it had reduced the first two cottages to ashes, but the third was saved.

The last sparks were being beaten out as Père Rascasse was heard clumping up the street in his heavy clogs. No one dared to say a word in sympathy. It went too deep for that—he had been born in his cottage. For a long time he looked at its remains. Then he asked where the Veuve Merlan had gone. When he was told to the house of the baker, in hysterics, he clumped away. It was all inexpressibly sad, as we reminded ourselves, grouped round the engine.

But it was much less so half-an-hour later, when Père Rascasse returned hand-in-hand with the Veuve, and smiling defiantly, to announce that as man and wife they proposed for the

future to inhabit the third cottage, so miraculously intact, into which the assembled company were immediately invited for a commemorative swig of eau-de-vie.

The enthusiasm which greeted this superbly romantic conclusion was marred only by a cynical smile which twisted the face of the Pompiers under the Minor Helmet. "As everyone knows," he hissed into my ear as we trooped in, "they haven't spoken since their great estrangement on the morning of the Armistice."

ERIC.

The Face

TENSE and rigid in every line. . . . her eyes narrowed to a single glint of determination. . . . a frown of deep concentration between them. . . . her mouth set firmly, its corners tightened by purpose. . . . the neck muscles taut and expectant. . . .

The face of a woman who would stop at nothing. . . . The face of a woman driving a car.



"THE PASSENGER SEE 'E'S READY FOR 'IS BREAKFAST NOW."

At the Play

"THE FLEET'S LIT UP"
(HIPPODROME)

THE title of this "musical frolic" has about it a suggestion of the flogging of a dead horse, the labouring of an old joke, and at the same time a not too scrupulous regard for that old enemy "good taste." Nothing could be fairer as an indication of the contents of the show. More dead horses are flogged, more old jokes laboured and less discrimination shown between the vulgar-but-funny and the merely contemptible than anyone who has not seen this kind of entertainment before would have believed possible. However, it all goes with a swing, the audience love it, and who wants to be bothered with wit anyway?

Let's have a joke—

"My father was eaten by cannibals."

"That's tough!"

"No, he was tender."

We simply roared. Some people on my right repeated it to Auntie, but they were so overcome with laughing themselves that they could hardly speak, so Auntie missed it after all. But it didn't matter. There were other jokes just as good to come.

MR. STANLEY LUPINO hands out the shoddy stuff at his disposal with apparent gusto (though I expect he hates it) and is at one time reduced to the old trick of accusing the audience at great length and with much merriment of having dirty minds. "That fellow STANLEY LUPINO—my dear, he's disgusting. You must go!" This is pure (*sic*) GEORGE ROBEY, though I confess that when Mr. ROBEY does it I am amused—a fact which made me feel all the more pharisaical when the rest of the audience were amused at Mr. LUPINO. It was somehow comforting after seeing this performance to come across an old notice of C. E. MONTAGUE'S in which he describes *The Belle of New York* as "an ecstatic fantasia on sex questions as these might be understood in fowl runs or by cats in our back yards." We have advanced since those days. The sex questions commonly

alluded to on the stage to-day would certainly not be understood in fowl runs.

No one can accuse the Hippodrome of being niggardly with its scenery. The stage simply drips with it whenever Professor ERNST STERN is allowed

end of Act I. that the Professor is naturally at his happiest. You know how crowded those old frigates used to get back in the early eighteenth century when they took the whole cast of a musical-comedy aboard?

Well, imagine one of them with a running fight going on, men shouting, cannons recoiling into the chorus, spars falling, STANLEY LUPINO lupinoing and, unless I am getting confused, a deal of full-throated singing from one and all. This is a cheerful and exciting scene which must have taken a lot of working out.

Something must be said about Miss FRANCES DAY. I felt very sorry for Miss DAY. She does much, with her liveliness and cleverness and her brilliant smile, to illuminate the show, but even she is often overwhelmed by the thinness, or, if you like, the thickness, of her material. There is a shocking example of this kind of handicap in a song she sings while the scene-shifters are busy. It is supposed to be a serious song—Miss DAY, in fact, asks us to forgive her for being serious—about a singer in a third-rate night-club who yearns for a glimpse of the country—you know the kind of thing? But what in mercy's name can anyone do with lines like

"Where are the song-birds
That never sing wrong-words?"

POOR Miss DAY.

There are one or two quite pleasant tunes (I should think COLE PORTER'S "D'Lovely" would be popular), and of course there are funny moments when Mr. LUPINO is clowning—he has a duelling scene which works up to a fine pitch of comic frenzy—but I cannot think of much else to say in favour of this entertainment—except that the audience clearly liked it.

Shall we conclude with another joke?—

"Think of a poet."

"Milton."

"Sanitas."

Let's hope Auntie didn't miss that one as well.

H. F. E.

"A mild shock is reported to have been felt at Naokhall, Assam. The epicure of the disturbance is supposed to be in Upper Burma."

Birmingham Paper.

Savouring it?



A SAILOR AND HIS LASS

Horatio Roper MR. STANLEY LUPINO
Polly Brown MISS FRANCES DAY

to have a go. Aboard the Seahorse Night Club, inside or outside the Palace of Zabalon (just one of those palaces), visitors will do well to watch their step and mind their heads. It is in the great sea-battle scene at the



THE SET'S MIXED UP

Willow Pattern

CRICKET must be a confusing business for the compiler of records, especially records of records. What a bewildering time Mr. Wisden must have had last week, with all his staff thrusting him aside with a muffled apology as they ran for the red-ink pot or hurried away to get help with the tearing up of the card-index system.

After all, when there's a record for the highest score in an innings and the highest score in a match and the highest score in a day, a morning, an afternoon, an over, a season or the History of the Game, and a record for the highest *individual* score in an innings, a match, a day, a morning, an afternoon, an over, a season or the History of the Game; when there's a record for the highest score at the fall of the first wicket and the second wicket and the third wicket, and so on down to the tenth, and a record for the highest first-wicket *stand*, and the highest second-wicket *stand*, and so on down to the tenth again; and when at the same time you've got to make sure that nobody's making the greatest number of runs in a season, tour or year, and at the same time doing your best to keep track of anybody who is showing signs of being the first to score fifty, a hundred, two hundred, three hundred, and so on up to almost any amount, or half killing themselves in an effort to score a thousand runs by the end of April, May, June, July and so on up to the following year; and when there's a mass of subsidiary records all laying themselves open to fracture, such as the maximum number of fours to an over, innings, match, day, etc., sixes to an over, innings, match, etc., singles, twos, threes, fives in an over, innings, etc., not to mention lost balls, stunned umpires, mutilated spectators, scorers and fieldsmen in an over, innings, match, day, morning, afternoon, season, tour or the History of the Game—when, as I say, there's all this to keep you on the alert, it's a wonder that the bowling records don't get overlooked altogether; and yet someone always manages to keep an eye open for the highest number of overs in an innings, match, day, season, etc., wickets in an over, innings, match, etc., runs to a wicket, balls to an over, overs to a match, matches to a wicket, no-balls to a match, wides to a season, seasons to a wicket, matches to a ball, seasons to an innings, runs to a wide, balls to a season, runs to a ball, overs to a run, matches to an over, and so on until the mind might be expected to boggle.

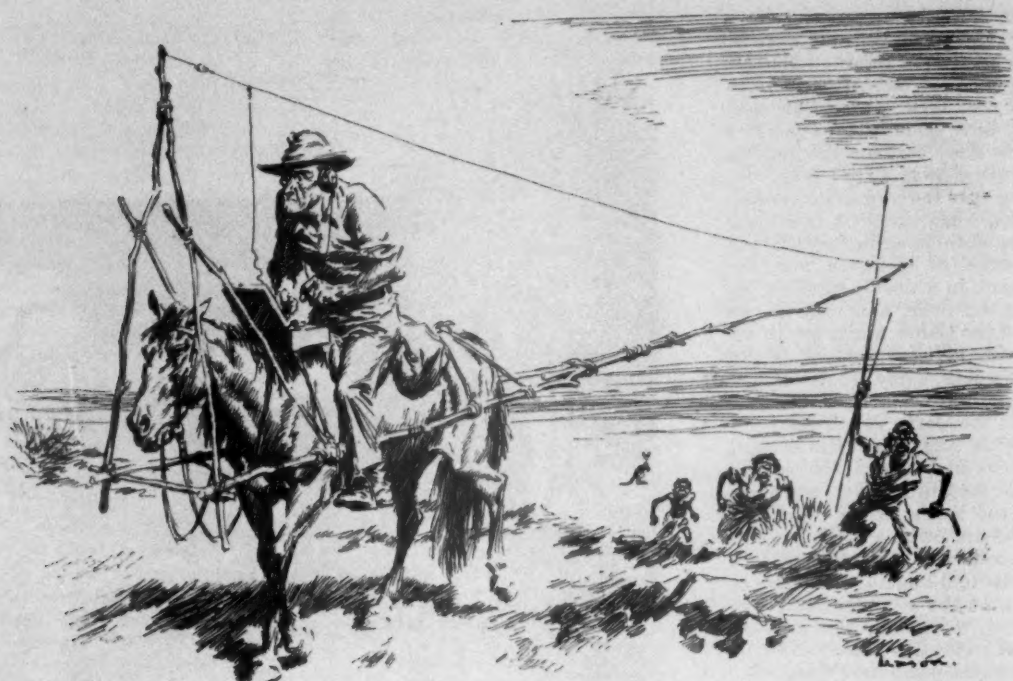


"WHAT I LIKE SO MUCH ABOUT THIS DEAR LITTLE CORNER OF OLD ENGLAND IS THAT IT'S SO EXACTLY LIKE THE SOUTH OF FRANCE."

But Mr. Wisden does not allow his mind to boggle, because what's left of it by this time is devoted to the activities of the fieldsmen in their endeavours to splinter a few lesser records, such as catches in an over, innings, match, day, career or the History of the Game; overthrows to an over, innings, match, etc., run-outs to an over, innings, match, etc.; or, for all I know, to a sprinkling of umpires' records—"Outs" in an over, "Not-outs" in an innings, "L.B.W.s" in a match, appeals against the light, the crowd, the length of the grass, or any other injustice; wrong decisions in a season, right decisions in a morning, doubtful decisions in a match, "wasn't

lookings" in a Test; spare sweaters to an over, spare caps to an innings, spare eye-shades to a tour, etc.; or there may be concentration on less popular but equally absorbing records established and broken by groundmen—covers to a pitch, "rain-stopped-plays" to a season, poles to a perch, leather-jackets to an Oval, and so on.

Yes, it must make a lot of work, and Mr. Wisden must heave a sigh of relief when somebody sets up a record that will never be broken. Somebody like Dr. GRACE, for example, who, as I understood from a very old gentleman sitting next to me on Tuesday, holds the unassailable record for being Dr. GRACE.



"HEY, BOSS! THEIR PFELLA HUTTON OUT YET?"

The New Mess Secretary

Letter from Adjutant, 1st Loamshires, to Second-Lieutenant Tunic, Mess Secretary, Officers' Mess.

The C.O. wishes me to point out that whenever he has come into the Mess latterly something or other is wrong. Yesterday there was some trouble about a new Mess waiter and the gravy; to-day he tells me he found all the blotting-paper on the writing-table chewed and nibbled. I fully appreciate that you have not had much service so far; at the same time, if you find your ordinary regimental duties so onerous that you are unable to give adequate attention to your job as Mess secretary, I shall have to afford you more time. An obvious method of so doing occurs to me on observing the frequency with which your name appears in the Short-Leave Book.

(Sgd.) L. WEEKLY-RETURN,
Adjutant.

From Mess Secretary to Adjutant.

SIR,—I am very sorry about the C.O.'s complaints. The Mess waiter

who spilt the gravy twice over him at lunch tells me he did it from nervousness, not knowing anything about waiting. It seems he was detailed for the job by Sergeant Grenade under a misapprehension, because he was a platelayer by trade.

As regards the nibbled blotting-paper, I cannot understand this. It may have been more nervousness on the waiter's part, after Colonel Howitzer had spoken to him.

M. TUNIC,
2nd Lieutenant.

From Adjutant to Mess Secretary (Two days later).

You are to take every step to stop this infernal nibbling that goes on in the Mess. The Colonel says that to-day it was the Mess envelopes, the Visitors' Book and a copy of *Imperial Military Geography*. What is it?

From Mess Secretary (Three days later).

SIR,—Mice.

Answer (on Margin).

What are you talking about? Mice what?

From Mess Secretary to Adjutant.

SIR,—I am answering your question of last week. It is mice that are nibbling things in the Mess. They had Private Trigger's (Mess waiter) cotton gloves last night, owing, he says, to some mutton-fat on them. Traps seem of no avail. What should I do?

Answer (written all across foregoing).

Get a cat, man, get a cat. Ask your O.C. if you want help. Don't keep on bothering me.

Letter from Second-Lieutenant Tunic to Captain Bayonet, O.C. "A" Coy.

SIR,—The Adjutant told me to get a cat for the Officers' Mess because mice are eating things—gloves, blotting-paper, geography-books, etc. He said I was to ask you if I wanted help. How should I set about this, please?

From Captain Bayonet to Second-Lieutenant Tunic.

If you wish to be issued with "Animals, Protective, for W.D. Property" you should indent officially on me and I will forward it to the proper quarter.

State definitely whether you want "Cats, Rat," or "Cats, Mouse." It might be rats if they eat geography-books.

From Captain Bayonet to Second-Lieutenant Tunic (Two days later).

Indent received. Please find here-with *Cats, Mouse, Tabby*... 1 (Male) and issue voucher (to be receipted) for same.

From Second-Lieutenant Tunic to Captain Bayonet (Three days later).

I am not absolutely certain about the feeding of this cat. It is a very fat cat and seems to want a lot of milk. It also likes fish: it had Lieutenant Holster's at breakfast yesterday.

From Captain Bayonet to Mess Secretary.

"Cats, Mouse," are official Army cats on the ration strength. Submit the demand for rations through me on the normal scale of *Milk, Pints, per Cat, Mouse, per day*... 1. It should of course only eat mice; and you should tell Lieut. Holster not to give it fish, however much he loves animals.

From Second-Lieutenant Tunic to Captain Bayonet.

Ration demand for *Cats, Mouse*... 1 herewith. *N.B.*—Holster did not give it fish: it jumped up when he wasn't looking—and I rather gathered at the time he does not love animals.

From Captain Bayonet to Second-Lieutenant Tunic.

I forgot to tell you that, should the cat not have finished its milk at the end of twenty-four hours, the unexpended portion of the day's ration must be brought on charge next day. Also that a return of mice caught on Government property has to be filed daily in triplicate.

From Second-Lieutenant Tunic to Captain Bayonet (Later).

We have only two mice so far and we rather think one was not caught by the cat but trodden on by Private Barrel, cook, when it was eating cheese in the larder, as it has rather a flat look and some cheese-crumbs on its whiskers. Besides, the cat still eats things in the kitchen. It tried the Mess breakfast-bacon the other day, but could not seem to find a rasher it really liked. The Mess caterer said it didn't matter as none of the officers would notice. Did you notice, by the way—Wednesday morning, the day I had a boiled egg?

From Captain Bayonet to Second-Lieutenant Tunic.

You should report to me in duplicate all cases of tampering with food, whether by mice or Cats, Mouse. And please note that in future I shall require boiled eggs only at breakfast.

From Second-Lieutenant Tunic to Captain Bayonet (Four days later).

SIR,—There was evidently some mistake about the "Cat, Mouse," issued a fortnight ago. I beg to report the arrival of *Cats, Mouse*... 5 (sex various). Do I apply for extra rations?

From Captain Bayonet to Second-Lieutenant Tunic.

The mistake was purely typographical. Re my letter of 10th instant, for "Cats, Mouse... 1 (Male)" please read "Cats, Mouse... 1 (Female)." Error regretted.

Rations for "Cats, Mouse... 5" are in order, but note that Allowance Regulations lay down that rations for the day of arrival can only be claimed for "troops disembarking before noon." Time of disembarkation should therefore be verified.

From Second-Lieutenant Tunic to Captain Bayonet.

The Colonel wants to know what I am doing about mice in the Mess, as *The Army List* has now been nibbled. Just off to see him—thought I'd let you know.

Very hurried note from Captain Bayonet to Adjutant.

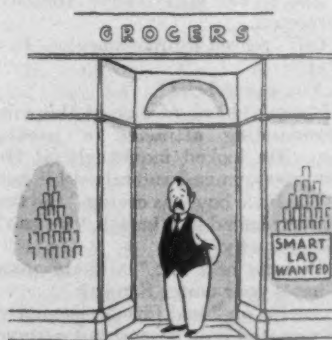
DEAR WEEKERS,—For Heaven's sake stop young Tunic from seeing the Old Man. I've been having a game with him about a cat in the Mess and was collecting a grand file to show you, and now the C.O. will see it.

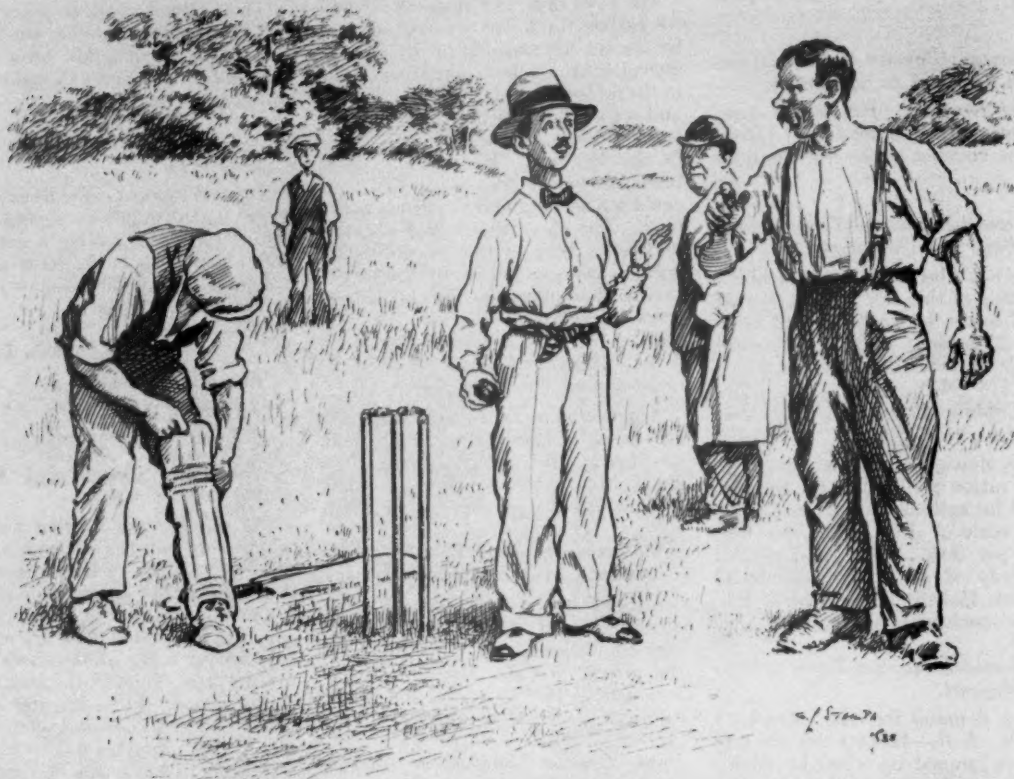
From Adjutant to Captain Bayonet.

Too late, old man; he's seen it. Now he wants to see you. A. A.

Something Sweet and Simple

As through the worried world you go, be sure you have a smile to show; however glum you are within, flood-light your frontage with a grin! If others should their woes discuss, explain that it's ridiculous their playful destiny to curse when others' fate is even worse. Should any crony say he's ill, endeavour to be brighter still, for even if his case is chronic, your cheerful chaff may prove a tonic. Greet total strangers with a smack of comradeship upon the back; from your example they may see what walking sunbeams men may be, and in their turn may spread the glow that decorates your features so. In business don't let care repress your radiant expansiveness, but everywhere behave as one whose mortal pilgrimage is fun. And if my gay advice you take, oh, what a crashing bore you'll make! I've written in this cretin way because it's popular today—a fact which painfully reveals the prevalence of imbeciles. W. K. H.





"'OW DO 'EE LIKE THE FIELD, ZUR?"
"OH! CHARMING, CHARMING."

Pitman

His family christened him Pitman, because his speech bore a marked resemblance to the efforts of an inexperienced shorthand-writer trying to transcribe his notes. But whereas the shorthand-writer omitted most of the vowels, Pitman omitted nearly all his consonants, which peculiarity made him intelligible only to those who knew him well.

It was while walking on the Embankment one day that Pitman lost his nurse. He was not alarmed, for it had happened before. He ran to a corner, peered round it, could not see her, and turned back again—carelessly, for he bumped into an elderly man.

"Look out, damn you!" growled the man.

Pitman gave him a sharp kick and ran away. He returned to the spot where he had last seen his nurse,

leaving the injured man gazing after him, unable to believe that so small and innocent a child could cause such sharp pain.

Pitman felt the time for serious action had come. He took his stand in the middle of the pavement and began to cry, softly at first and gradually increasing the volume.

The move had its expected effect. An old lady approached, looked, hesitated, then, moved to pity, spoke.

"What's the matter, little boy?"

"I 'oh," sobbed Pitman.

"You've what, dear?"

"I 'oh aw ah ay eh," wailed Pitman in explanation.

The old lady looked round helplessly and met the eyes of another lady, who approached.

"Is the little boy . . . ?"

"I think he is," said the old lady, "but I can't quite make out what he says."

"Oh," said the second lady in a firm tone, "I'm used to children. Now, my

child, stop that foolish crying and tell me what is the matter. Are you alone?"

The answer to this was so obvious to Pitman that he disdained to reply at all.

"Who are you with?" the lady reiterated.

"Aw a a el," Pitman explained laboriously.

"You're out with Nell?" the lady interpreted.

"Oh!" roared Pitman angrily, "I aw a a el."

"You saw a bell?"

Pitman's shriek of rage at this misunderstanding attracted a passing male. He looked inquiringly at the little group, paused and raised his hat.

"The little boy was crying," the two ladies explained in a breath, "we can't make out why."

"Perhaps he's lost," said the man. "What's your name, Sonny?"

"'on Ee 'on," said Pitman promptly, and repeated it on request but without enlightening his hearers.

"I don't believe," said the strong-minded lady in a burst of inspiration, "that the child speaks English."

"He has a French look," the other said hopefully.

"*Êtes-vous Français?*" inquired the second lady, with an accent that made her intelligible only to herself.

Pitman said nothing.

"No," she said, "he's not French."

They tried German next with the help of a passer-by who had been studying for three weeks at evening classes.

"*Wie heissen Sie?*" he inquired haltingly.

Pitman looked bored, and they decided he wasn't German. An obliging man selling ice-cream tried Italian, and then someone thought he might be a Russian child brought over for Soviet propaganda, but this his first friend, the old lady, would not allow. Russians, she said, were not very nice. They waved red flags and burned Bibles. During the discussion Pitman solaced himself by unscrewing the knob of the strong-minded lady's umbrella.

"Put that back at once," she snapped, suddenly discovering what had kept him so quiet. Obediently he screwed it on again.

"He knows what you say to him in English," someone pointed out.

"I think he is English," maintained the old lady.

"I think he's mentally deficient," said the other acidly.

"I'll try him again," said the young man. "Where do you live, Sonny?"

"'ee 'aw 'ay 'ower 'ee," said Pitman promptly.

"Sounds like 'Hee-Haw' to me," said a stout man, "and upon my word I agree."

His voice displeased Pitman, and he took the top of the umbrella, which he had again unscrewed, and threw it at him.

"Now then, now then," said a voice from behind, as a large policeman towered over them, "what's all this?"

Everybody told him.

The policeman looked at Pitman, who, knowing a sensible man when he saw him, ran up and embraced his legs.

"Now then, Sonny"—the policeman swung him up—"what's the trouble? Lost yourself?"

Pitman nodded vigorously.

"I think he's dumb," someone volunteered.

"Not him," said the policeman.

"What's your name, Sonny?"

"'on 'ee 'on."

"Oh, John Easton?"



Pitman nodded, and the crowd, rapidly growing, gasped.

"Where d' you live?"

"'ee aw 'ay 'ower 'ee,"

"Say it again, slow," the policeman commanded.

Pitman obliged.

"Three four A, Gower Street?"

Pitman squealed delightedly and kissed the policeman.

A dishevelled panting figure shot into the crowd.

"Ah' aa!" yelled Pitman.

"Pitman, oo naughty boy-boy," cried the figure, "oh, baddy, baddy boy!"

"There you are," said the policeman, restoring Pitman to his nurse; "you take more care of him next time."

The old lady remained after Pitman had been led away, examining the policeman with respectful admiring eyes.

"How you understood him I can't make out," she said.

"Oh, well, Ma'am," said the policeman kindly, "you see I'm a family man myself."

The Wall Street Sonata

(With apologies to the B.B.C.)

It opens quietly—pp—

But soon maintains a firmer tone,
Foreshadowing a change of key
Whereby some Minor gains are shown.

Hark! what a shaded gain was that!
Ah! what a technical rebound!
What interplay of sharp and flat
Leading to nervousness all round!

O Wall! O Street and lovely Wall!
O ticker beating perfect time!
That strain again! it had a fall
Of half to fractions of a dime.

The "sixths diminished, sigh on sigh,"
Encourage sentiment throughout,
While Major losses make reply
"In notes with many a winding bout."

But oh! the catch in every throat
Of millions wondering to-night
If it will close upon a note—
Slack, firm, dull, tense, subdued or
bright—
In short, a black key or a white.

Letters from a Gunner

IV.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—10 A.M. 5.8.38. Somewhere in K*st (or perhaps for greater secrecy, "Somewhere in *en*"). Here I am, out in the wilds, waiting for hostilities to commence. All over the East of England are similar figures—Chartered Accountants, Hairdressers, Sales Representatives, all the hard-working men of England, sitting round their predictors or height-finders, telephones or telescopes, slightly uncomfortable in their scratchy khaki, uneasily balancing tin hats in unaccustomed positions, oppressed by a respirator tied tightly round their chests, wondering why it seems impossible to fry an egg whole on an Army cooker or keep it hot, and all the time keeping their eyes glued to the Eastern horizon for the first glimpse of the raiders. And probably in scores of R.A.F. Messes genteel pilot-officers are lazily throwing down their napkins and lighting an after-breakfast cigarette and saying, "Well, chaps, what about starting this war?"

Actually we are in the middle of a field that slopes down to the escarpment of the North Downs. We first saw it last night about midnight, having had a rather circuitous journey, due to the fact that the Battery-Sergeant-Major's map had been sent off

with the advance-party, and the bus-driver who drove us was familiar only with London north of the Thames.

On arrival we found that the Army had not forgotten us. Tents were there in their clumsy sacks, and tables and benches, even a new hatchet and scrubbing-brush. Only one detail was lacking: tent-pegs and mallet. As it was raining (very hard) we abandoned our attempts to make the tent-poles stand upright by mere interplay of opposing stresses and returned to one of the other camps to force our wet and clumsy selves on top of other unfortunates who had imagined that they were in for a night's rest. So this morning we spent the last few hours of peace in pitching our camp.

But now we are ready. I have a slight aversion from leaving for a war on the fourth of August in any year. One ought not to make the same mistake twice. However, perhaps the War Office has a hitherto unsuspected sense of sardonic humour. But no matter; in half-an-hour the first planes will be over. Perhaps by then I shall have devised some means of preventing my tin hat from slipping over my eyes or clanging heavily on the height-finder as I lean forward. Perhaps even my Army boots (from their size I feel they should be written "Boots") will have undergone some miraculous change and have ceased to press their way into my very tibia and fibula. We shall see.

Later.—I am sorry to say that we are

wiped out. Five minutes ago three large monoplane bombers emerged from the slight haze and altered their course so as to fly directly over the camp.

We are theoretically a mere hole in the ground round which a few disturbed cattle mournfully chew the cud, with perhaps a V.A.D. or so sadly regretting that there is not even a little piece left to bandage. But there is a slight chance of our survival: (a) that the aforesaid three bombers were mere ghosts, their originals having been shot down in flames between here and Folkestone, or (b) that we happened to be in our as yet imaginary dug-outs and so escaped disaster. It is very difficult to tell if one is alive or dead in this war.

Later.—Assuming I am not dead, I am now taking my first stretch of night duty and writing this by the light of an electric-torch (torch, electric battery commander, for the use of, one). I am beginning to realise there is something to be said for an Army life. For the last twenty-four hours I have been relieved of all responsibility; my movements have been directed by those whom the War Office has been pleased to place over us. Food has appeared at regular intervals, brought on lorries organised with complete competence. I have only two duties: one to do what I am told, and the other to keep myself clean and tidy. I do not have to pay any bills, plan any meals, certify any accounts, be nice to any clients. The War Office pays the bills and (dare I suggest it?) the Foreign Office finds the clients.

The moon is setting and the three height-takers sit around the instrument and talk—I shall tell you about the talk some day. Pickavance, one of the three, shattered me by a raking broadside on seventeenth-century literature, but I found him very vague on atomic structure. The third member of our detachment is, you will not be surprised to hear, Boy Killey.

Five minutes ago we heard a clock in the valley strike two. Boy Killey sat up suddenly, then lay back and looked up at the moon. "Blimey!" he said at last, "to think I'm being paid to stay up as late as this!"

Your loving Son,
HAROLD.

"In the face of these conditions, to Empire and one of the world's greatest democracies," he said, "I bring a message from men of Welsh blood who are citizens of another and great younger democracy, the United States of you Welshmen, citizens of the British America. It is a simple message."—*Weekly Paper*.

He flatters himself.



"WOULD YOU MIND GETTING ON WITH YOUR WINDOW-CLEANING AND ALLOW ME TO DICTATE MY LETTERS IN MY OWN WAY?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

King's Champion

WHATEVER measure of assent or dissent may be given to its judgments, the temper of *The Windsor Tapestry* (RICH AND COWAN, 16/-) is to be welcomed. So mealy-mouthed (except when it is merely scurrilous) has criticism of the living become that competent invective is a refreshment. Mr. COMPTON MACKENZIE sincerely believes that a wrong has been done to a man he admires, and "rising indignation"—*sæva indignatio*—will not absolve him from the task of arraigning the culprits. So he has laid a gallant lance in rest and, if he sometimes tilts at windmills, he has done fine execution among the windbags and the weathercocks. Very likely history will allow Lord BALDWIN more virtues than does Mr. MACKENZIE, but that much of the satire in these sparkling pages is legitimate few will deny. Nor are they confined to contemporary (or recent) controversy. Mr. MACKENZIE's quest for the truth has carried him far. A brilliant sketch of late Victorian and Edwardian society is followed, *à propos* of the vexed question of morganatic marriages, by an entertaining encyclopædia of the matrimonial eccentricities of the House of Hanover. And then we are boldly plunged into the mazes of theological controversy and canon and constitutional law. Mr. MACKENZIE, in short, has written a polemic of remarkable variety which is sometimes unjust, sometimes a little absurd, but always fundamentally admirable in its championship of honesty and liberty and its contempt for cant, and always eminently readable.

Canada at War

The Official History of the Canadian Forces in the Great War, 1914-1919, compiled by Colonel A. FORTESCUE DUGUID and published by authority of the Minister of National Defence, is to be a permanent record worthy, if anything could be worthy, no less of the long years it has been in preparation than of the heroic series of events calling it into existence. The first instalment, priced with its companion volume of maps and appendices at three-and-a-half dollars, is so conscientious in its war preparations that it brings the first Canadian units into action only at page 179, and it carries the story no further than September, 1915. It is very largely concerned with the second battle



Q. E. D.

"WHAT'S UP WI' SAL?"

"AIN'T YER 'ERD? SHE'S MARRIED AGIN!"

Phil May, September 1st, 1894.

of Ypres, on which an overwhelming flood of accuracy is brought to bear. From it there emerges conclusive evidence that the Canadian contingent saved the situation at a desperate pinch and, much more surprisingly, that the

first German gas attack, which they had then to endure, did not come without warning, at least to the regimental officers. The real vital matter in this book is not to be found in the formal narrative but in the appendices with their illuminating bits of evidence from enemy sources, polite back-chat between high authorities, operation orders, realistic reports on the condition of trenches and curt messages interchanged in the stress of action.

The Tale of a Tale

Mr. E. C. LARGE, as befits his name, is generous. He gives us two novels for the price and under the cover of one. First there is the story of *Charles Pry*, chemical engineer out of work, who sits down to write a novel, not, as so many of his contemporaries would appear to do, because that is the last resort of the unemployed (and probably unemployed), but because he really has a tale to tell and, as it transpires, a gift for telling it. Then—not on the second plane, but given the same relief as the circumambient biography of its author—is that tale itself, which is called *Asleep in the Afternoon* (CAPE, 7/6). It is a modern fantasy, realistic and satirical, concerned with the invention of an appliance for the inducement of sleep at will and with its commercial and, so to speak, its spiritual exploitation. Presented to us in fragments, all interwoven with the physical experiences and intellectual and emotional explorations of the novelist, this, although the erotic implications may not please everyone, is excellent stuff, if a little over-elaborated; and *Agatha Boom*, the spiritual exploiter of Boom Sleep, adept in all the fads and isms and ologies and *femme très forte*, is a notable figure. But what is most interesting is the subtlety with which Mr. LARGE presents the interplay between *Pry's* life and his art, the mutual modifications, the partial borrowings and distorted parallels. He has written a book for novelists to read and ponder and others to read and enjoy.



Royalty and Romance

In this year of grace the novelist who sticks to his job and is primarily engaged on telling a tale often encounters derisive criticism, and the reason why Mr. A. E. W. MASON has in the main escaped censure is that his stories carry with them convincing evidence of skilled craftsmanship and excellent characterisation. *Königsmark* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), in which *Sophia Dorothea* and *Count Philip of Königsmark* play the leading rôles, is in essentials no new tale, and it is greatly to Mr. MASON's credit that he is not for one moment impeded by what in less able

hands might have been a shattering handicap. Also, although he may at times arrange historical facts to suit his fancy, he does not cast history to the winds of heaven. In short this is a really fine romantic novel and it contains scenes (e.g. the trial of *Philip's* brother for murder) that alone would give Mr. MASON high place among our descriptive writers. And *Philip* himself as drawn here is psychologically a remarkable study.

Celebrations

As a detective capable of putting two and two together and getting the correct answer *Asey Mayo* does nothing to injure his reputation in *Figure Away* (COLLINS, 7/6). But Miss PHOEBE ATWOOD TAYLOR's stage is so crowded and her point of view is so profoundly American that some British readers may find it difficult to follow *Asey* in his wonderful display of mental and physical activity. It will however be readily admitted that Miss TAYLOR's picture of a small American town in the throes of celebrating "Old Home Week" is always vivid and frequently amusing. And *Asey's* final explanations bring him back once more into the ranks of ordinary mortals.

An Old Foundation

For *Westminster* (5/-), which is the latest addition to Messrs. BLACKIE's series of English Public Schools, Mr. J. D. CARLETON has made a judicious selection from the wealth of material at his command, and his account of the school, though not pretending to be anything more than a "slight sketch," is full of interesting information. Tracing back its origin to the middle of the fourteenth century, Westminster is the proud and happy possessor of a history, and its close connection with the Abbey gives it a distinction to which Mr. CARLETON draws our close attention. Several illustrations, excellently reproduced, of the School in modern times are acceptable additions to an admirable book.

Proverbial Plenty

Nothing illuminates a man's conversation so well as the judicious use of an apt proverb from the Turkish or from Chittagong, or perhaps culled from the rich storehouse of Basutoland lore. He might dine out for a year, with profit to himself and pleasure to others, on the twenty-six thousand *Racial Proverbs* (ROUTLEDGE, 35/-) collected by Dr. SELWYN GURNEY CHAMPION. "Although you know very much, nevertheless take advice from your hat," say the Armenians with an obscurity which only renders the remark more crushing. There is plenty of entertainment of this kind to be derived from this noble volume.

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Charivaria

A WRITER says: "A marriage seldom fails when husband and wife have something in common to laugh about." A photograph of their wedding-group, for instance.

★ ★ ★

Let's Be Frank

"Not until doctors had treated him did he lose consciousness."—*Sunday Paper*.

★ ★ ★

A *Daily Express* photograph shows Mr. LLOYD GEORGE with one of his pets . . . and it isn't Mr. NEVILLE CHAMBERLAIN either.

★ ★ ★

A jockey admits that his secret for getting down his weight is a diet of spinach. He fails, however, to give his secret for getting down the spinach.



★ ★ ★

Two professional golfers recently played a match backwards. We presume they started off by shouting "Aft!"

★ ★ ★

"September and October are the months in which seaside robberies are most numerous," observes a writer. When the coast is clear, naturally.

★ ★ ★

"On two or three days the weather was so bad that the sportsmen, on arriving at their beats, were unable to face the driving wind and rain, and had to return home. This, of course, made the grouse very wild."—*The Scotsman*.

They hate missing their sport.

★ ★ ★

A Hampshire man reports that he dug up more than two hundred old razor-blades in his garden recently. Can it be that his gooseberries are indulging in secret shaving?



A man made up as a frog tried to get into a fancy-dress carnival without paying. Naturally he was told to hop it.

★ ★ ★

"The L.M.S. Station Master will gladly give you the time of departure and the fare."—From "*Holidays by L.M.S.*"

Can you wonder Home Rails are weak?

★ ★ ★

A stockbroker living in Guildford has bought a gorgonzola cheese and placed it in his cellar "for it to ripen properly." He wants to mould it nearer to his heart's desire.

★ ★ ★

A London boy recently ate four dozen apples in a day. But it was no use—a doctor arrived at the house towards evening.

★ ★ ★

In an American Big-Game Hunters' Handbook certain animals of increasing rarity are starred. Tigers, however, are striped.

★ ★ ★

A burglar found by the police in a house said at first that he was a plumber. A thin story. He had his tools with him.

★ ★ ★

"Lost: coat, hat, false teeth, Friday night."

Edinburgh Evening News.

Been arguing again?

★ ★ ★

Experiments are being made with new types of containers for eggs. Hens, however, continue to use shells.

★ ★ ★

According to an expert a poultry farm should be conducted in the same way as a business house. With the hens clucking in promptly every morning.



There Will Be No War. . . .

THERE will be no war of the nations,
At least so the wise men say;
There will be no war while patience,
Reason and tact have sway,
And that's a good thing anyway.

For the one omnipotent Leader
Whom Wotan appointed to rule
Has looked at the skies, dear reader,
And studied the stars in the pool,
And he isn't a perfect fool.

He knows that of all the weapons
Profitless, foul, accursed—
For when does it gain you threepence
When the dust and the smoke are
dispersed?—
He knows that war is the worst.

Twice, and in peace, he has smitten—
Thrice, and has gained his plan.
He has so many friends in Britain
To help him whenever they can,
Has this remarkable man.

And so long as the bullying speeches
And the gun and the tank at the door
And the bluff that the preacher preaches
May get him a good deal more,
I should think there will be no war. EVOE.

Twopennyworth

It was one of those days. The skies were leaden, the sands looked long and wet and utterly deserted, the sea slopped about the ironwork of the pier in a grey and disconsolate fashion. If there had been a seagull somewhere with a broken wing the picture would have been complete. But all the seagulls with broken wings had had the sense to get in out of the rain. Like the little boys with their pails and patient nannies, like the beach-girls and the mothers of five and the young gentlemen in purple trousers who do so much to reconcile me to my lost youth, they had called it a day and gone home. Only I and my flapping mackintosh in all creation were abroad that day. Why we were out, my mackintosh and I? Were we bored, sleepless, in love, homeless, buying a paper? I don't remember. We were just out.

I cannot better express the curious state I was in that afternoon than by saying that I paid twopence to go on the pier. I am not a pier-man. Generally speaking I would pay twopence gladly not to go on any of the piers that decorate our island seaboard. But on a wet day it is all rather different. It is quite possible on such a day as I have described to be the only living thing on all that vast expanse of steel and planking—unless you count the turnstile-man as a living thing, and even he is not properly speaking on board. Seen in his right perspective from the far end of the pier he is less than nothing, a mere dot, a land-lubber. It is rather nice to be the only living thing on anything.

I confess that these reflections did not strike me all at once after I had paid my twopence and taken over my

command. For a while I leant over the rail and thought how wretched it must be to be a fish. No variety. No rest and change. No fires, no bedroom slippers, no kidneys and bacon. Just one damned lugworm after another. Once as I gazed down into the waste of waters I thought I saw a cod or a turbot swimming in a hopeless way near the surface, and I shouted down to it, "Are you happy, Fish?" but it only flicked its tail and would not stay for an answer. "Go to blazes, then!" I said, and walked away.

I had a go at one of those football games, trying hard not to let my right hand know what my left was doing; but one of the full-backs had a game leg, so I gave it up and spent a penny on the Execution of Anne Boleyn. In this unique and terrifying spectacle two doors swing open, unhappy Anne walks out and lays her head on the block, and the executioner, glad of a change from the monotony of holding his axe above his head, brings it down towards his victim's neck in a series of awe-inspiring jerks. I have watched the whole business through scores of times and have never seen any blood yet; the executioner is regularly about half-an-inch short in his stroke, and it's just that extra half-inch that makes all the difference in executions. But I haven't given up hoping.

However, on this particular afternoon the ceremony never got under way at all. I banged on the glass and kicked the sides of the machine but it was no good. The doors remained fast shut and Anne Boleyn stayed resolutely indoors. Perhaps she had a cold; or maybe she just wasn't in the mood to have her head cut off that afternoon. And there was that wretched executioner with his arms right up in the air, just longing to get them down for a bit and let the blood run into his fingers—his own blood, I mean. After a little thought and a turn or two round the deck I went back to the pier-house.

"I say," I said, "I've spent a penny on Anne Boleyn and nothing's happened."

The turnstile-man considered this. He did not appear to be very deeply moved.

"Have you pushed the button-thing?" he asked.

"No," I said. "What button-thing?"

He told me that there ought to be a button that returned bent or damaged coins, and I left him. There was no button that I could see, so I went right forward and let the wind and the rain have their way with me. It was fine out there, fronting the great grey seas. I thought of Drake and Raleigh and Frobisher, and of what the sea had meant to them and to all of us in our rough island story, and how splendid a thing it was to have the blood of such men running fierce and free in one's veins. My spirits rose to meet the challenge of the elements and my keen eyes swept the distant horizon.

"Port your hellum, bo'sun," I shouted, "port half-a-point!"

An angry wave slapped the stout timbers below me and drenched me with spray, but I was not afraid.

"Keep her steady as she goes!" I yelled, and steady she was—as a rock. But the wind was rising. We shipped another sea—a green one this time—or greenish, and I turned to my First Officer. There was little more that I could do. "Call me if you want me, Mr. Blake," I said quietly, and left the bridge.

There is a good deal to be said for a pier as against an Atlantic liner when it comes to a comparison. There isn't a ship afloat that can hold a candle to a first-class pier for overall length or dependability in all weathers. And look at the fittings. You won't find a bandstand with a glass roof on the *Queen Mary*, nor yet a high-diving board giving direct access to the open sea. Thinking of these things as I strolled along, and noting my well-scrubbed decks, the



A DRESS FOR THE PARTY

["The Communist Party is making another bid for admission to the Labour Party as an affiliated organisation."—*The Times*.]



"MISS SYLVIA ASKED ME TO INQUIRE, YOUR LADYSHIP, WHETHER SHE NEED WASH THIS MORNING IN VIEW OF HER HAVING TAKEN A BATH ONLY YESTERDAY EVENING."

glisten of my new green paint and the trim appearance of my innumerable glazed shelters, I confess that a glow of pride warmed my breast. "Aha!" I breathed, and flung out my arms to the tempest.

It was unfortunate in such a mood and at such a moment that my eye should alight on that accursed Anne Boleyn machine. The old feeling of injury came flooding back with redoubled force. It seemed to me disgraceful that so well-found a vessel should be marred by even the slightest mechanical flaw. Everything ought to run like clockwork at sea, I thought—especially clockwork. "What would the Admiral say?" I found myself wondering as I made my way, with the unmistakable rolling gait of the seafaring man, back to the pier-house.

"Ahoy there!" I shouted.

The turnstile-man poked a distinctly mutinous face out through his port-hole.

"Well, what is it now?" he growled.

"That machine," I said. "I can't get my penny back."

"Tut!" said the man.

"Tut is all very well," I said angrily, "but it doesn't return the penny. What are you going to do?"

"Not my department," he said in the maddening way

these officials have. "You'll have to send in a written claim to the proper authority."

"It's an absolute disgrace," I said, and I told him pretty straight just how disgraceful it was. "Where would the Navy be if things were done in this slipshod fashion in the Service?" I asked him.

"Well," he said, "it's worth it—just to be rid of you," and he put his hand in his pocket and flipped a penny across at me. "Spend it slowly," he said. "It's all you'll get."

I looked the fellow up and down.

"I shall report you," I said slowly, "for insolence and slackness and—yes—for hazarding your ship at sea."

"Report me, is it? Who to?"

I thought rapidly. There must be some authority charged with the control of the network of piers and jetties round our coast.

"Trinity House," I said at last and swept past him.

At least I should have swept past him if he hadn't locked the exit turnstile when I was halfway through. He kept me there laughing at me for about five minutes while the blood of Drake and Raleigh coursed fiercely and freely through my veins.

H. F. E.

My Garden

(Not T. E. Brown's)

A GARDEN is a loathsome thing, God wot!
 Rose plot
 Fringed pool—
 The blinking lot
 Are simply full
 Of the foulest weeds;
 Not the promising seeds
 That I so carefully sowed from the packet.
 This seed business, by the way, is an absolute racket:
 Either there's a drought or an untimely shower
 And they don't come up;
 Or if they do come up they don't flower
 Like the picture.
 I mean this to be taken as a definite stricture
 On the people who so consistently gum up
 My garden plans.
 For beds that should be just one blaze
 Of bloom are choked in seven days
 With Dutch Clover, Dead Nettle, Ribwort-Plantain,
 Creeping-Thistle, Shepherd's-Purse, Yarrow, Hawk-
 weed, Convolvulus, Colt's-foot and all,
 Leaving me to weed and weed and weed
 On all fours. . . .

My back aches and a lousy lumbar pain
 Sends me indoors. . . .

Meanwhile the charlock and the thistle keep
 The beds where wallflowers flourished. I could weep
 To see the work I have to do—
 Tulips to be lifted,
 Leaf-mould to be sifted,
 Tool-shed in a fearful mess
 As though ransacked by burglars,
 Hedges not clipped,
 Dead blooms not snipped,
 Ramblers not tied on pergolas.
 And I look at the aisle of shrubs that I never have tackled
 before,
 Not in spring nor in middle summer—though always I'd
 do it, I swore.
 Forsythia, weigela, cydonia,
 Syringa, escallonia,
 Philadelphus—
 Heaven help us!
 Should I prune
 Which in June?
 Or which in September?
 I'm darned if I remember!
 Is it too soon
 To cut back jessamine?
 Lord, what a mess I'm in! . . .

And now I have come to my roses,
 Or rather the "Pests of the Rose";
 For roses are not for our noses
 But for aphids, as everyone knows,
 And mildew and black-spot and leaf-scorch
 And weevil and canker and rust.
 And you simply must
 Spray and spray and spray and spray
 Till you come to the end of the working day.

There's nothing but work in a garden,
 Whatever enthusiasts say,
 E'en though you put off till the morrow
 The tasks you should tackle to-day.
 For each morrow brings
 New things:
 Unexpected failures
 From late frosts on your dahlias;
 Or painful stoopings
 After slugs on your lupins;
 Or next-door's spaniels
 Burying bones in your annuals;
 Or the mowing-machine
 Wanting a clean—
 In fact all the regular routine.
 There's planting and staking and tying,
 And watering in a drought,
 And potting up and potting on,
 And likewise bedding out.
 And constant hard endeavour
 If you want things to succeed—
 I could go on for ever,
 But I *must* go and weed. . . .

A garden is a loathsome thing, God wot!
 God, what a lot of work there is to do!

A. A.



"Isn't it wonderful, Professor? It takes the light of the stars millions and millions of years to reach us, and yet there they are—FUNCTUAL EVERY NIGHT."



"DID YOU EVER HEAR ME IMITATE A FIG SQUEALING?"

The Bat

WHEN the bat flew in through the dining-room window of the Hôtel Crevette Rouge et du Port dusk was creeping down over the harbour and the last mackerel of the fish-course had been reduced to an untidy skeleton on the plate of the Professor from Idahoopie Falls.

"So few people," the Professor was saying, "suspect the hollyhock of an emotional life as vivid and varied as any in the vegetable kingdom. One of my stoo-dents has hung around the hollyhock for three terms, and his graphs show an acute awareness both of passion and a sort of dumb tenderness." One of the two English ladies, speaking very softly and confidentially, informed him that her Uncle William had always held stoutly that plants had souls.

The circular lady from Paris, who sat at a table between that of the fruiterer from Arles and that of the sad-eyed Englishman who had been taking *War and Peace* with his meals for over two months, was complaining that the nourishment in the hotel was

not good. "For the second time to-day," she said, "they have allowed the frying-oil to burn inexcusably." A certain emphasis was given to anything she cared to say by the fact that the massive tam-o-shanter she wore disobeyed all the rules by sagging heavily on both sides of her face, so that she gave the exciting impression of having just made a forced landing under a parachute of black velvet. Abandoning Tolstoy for an impatient second

the Englishman agreed that she might well be right.

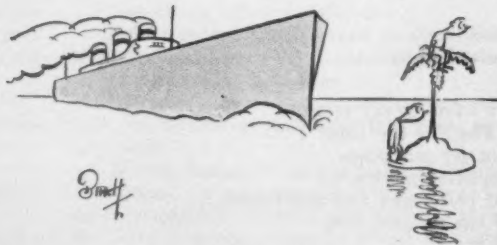
"Without doubt I should have struck sooner, but you all know what whiting are," the fruiterer was saying. He was spending the whole of his holidays hanging over the back of a small boat, glued anxiously to a length of string, and he appeared to be extracting a strange perverted pleasure from the experience.

"Another thing that dear Uncle William often remarked," murmured the second of the two English ladies, "was what a sore embarrassment to the Anglo-Saxons all those baths must have been which the Romans left behind."

"I expect they kept coal in them," said the Professor.

It was at this point precisely that the bat was observed. After flying twice round the room it settled soberly enough, though upside-down, on the central chandelier. High up near the ceiling, this hung exactly over the head of the schoolmistress from Besançon, and, it being obviously her honour, she screamed first. She screamed very well. The boy Jacques, who did the waiting when the hotel was not waiting for him, came in at that moment carrying a dish of stuffed tomatoes, and he dropped it with a crash which checked her for a second. The tomatoes bowled wildly about the floor, making it look as if someone had been practising snooker in a large way. Then one of the English ladies joined in the screaming.

"Allow me," said the fruiterer. "The animal is out of reach, but if I mount upon the table of Mademoiselle I may dislodge it with a morsel of bread." He did as he suggested, emptying a basket without, however, scoring a direct hit. The bat slept on; but one heavy crust ricocheted downwards and, catching the schoolmistress a



"SAIL-HO!"



"WE'RE LEADING NOW, YOUR GRACE!"

glancing blow on the temple, silenced her instantly.

"Had my husband been here he would have shot it," said the lady from Paris. "No one could touch him in the chase. But, alas! there are twenty-three years he is dead."

"With a long stick I could squash it in a trice," the fruiterer assured her.

The Professor was standing under the chandelier, peering up through thick spectacles and chanting from memory in a low reverent voice: "The forelimbs are greatly developed and between each of the four fingers is a skin expansion. . . . The thumb does not share in the flight-modifications. . . . The bones of the limbs have large medullary cavities."

"Why not go on with our dinner?" asked the English lady who had not screamed. "I begin to wonder if we are wise to disturb the creature at all."

"Perhaps you could change places with me first?" the schoolmistress suggested.

The Professor was still chanting: "The ribs are much flattened, the pelvic girdle is small and weak. . . ."

"I shall never forget that poor gel at Portofino who got one in her hair and had to have it *all off*," moaned the other English lady, now quieter.

The reappearance of Jacques carry-

ing a bucket of water and a garden-squirt was hailed with delight by the fruiterer, who seized the weapon. He loaded it and took careful aim; but as he stepped back at the crucial moment on a stuffed tomato the shot went wide and a pint or so of rusty water took the sad-eyed Englishman in the chest. He looked up petulantly from his book.

"What *is* it?" he demanded. "Oh, a bat. You'll never get rid of it by violence. You are trying to get rid of it, I take it?" A chorus from the ladies assured him on this point. "Very well, will somebody hold the table for me? Is there an empty basket?"

"Hey, what are you going to do?" asked the Professor.

"Oh, just an old native trick I picked up from a witch-doctor in the Umpopo country many years ago. I must have absolute silence. It will take about half a minute for me to dominate the creature, when it will fall senseless into the basket. We can then put it outside to recover."

"I'll time you. You seem pretty confident," said the Professor.

"Used to do it every night in the club at Bungapoogle," the Englishman told him. "Never failed. Now quiet, please."

Stepping up on to the table and

holding the basket directly underneath the bat he fell quickly into a sort of trance. His head thrown back, his eyes narrowed into pin-points of concentration, he forced his breathing into a loud waltz-rhythm and began to sway so drunkenly that the fruiterer and the Professor had to redouble their grip on the table. . . .

"One minute," the Professor murmured.

"Two minutes."

Clearly an enormous expenditure of will-power was going on. Rivulets started up on the Englishman's forehead, and at the line of his collar his neck was turning an ugly puce.

"Three minutes." The tension in the room was frightful. The schoolmistress fainted. The Englishman was quivering a little at the knees. But the bat stayed put.

"Four minutes." The atmosphere felt as if a vast quantity of electricity was about to be discharged.

"Five minutes."

As the Professor spoke the words the bat awoke from what must have been a refreshing sleep, for as it flew lightly round the room on its way to the window it gave the Englishman a playful dig between the eyes. A moment later it was swallowed up in the night outside.

ERIC.

At the Pictures

GONE WITH THE HERD

LOOKING back on *The Texans*, I realise that *Ivy Preston* must have been called on to feel a large number of assorted emotions, but I can't recall that JOAN BENNETT showed any to speak of. Indeed the *soignée* and rather inflexible Miss BENNETT seems to me an odd choice for the part of a fiery Southern girl who begins by wanting to reopen the Civil War with the help of Maximilian of Mexico and goes on by driving for thousands of miles in the middle of a herd of cattle. Even a dust-storm leaves her almost totally untousled; but of course there may have been Southern belles like that.

There are ten thousand head of cattle belonging to the Prestons (the other Preston is the grandmother, MAY ROBSON, so you know what *she's* like), and the dastardly carpet-baggers in 1863 want to tax them at a dollar a head. Like everyone else in the conquered South, the Prestons have no money; and so the obvious solution is to run off with the cattle to Kansas, where beef is needed. With the help of Kirk Jordan (RANDOLPH SCOTT) that is what *Ivy* does.

There are some wonderfully spectacular scenes in this picture—nearly all beef. Beef swimming rivers, beef in the snow, in the dust, attacked by Indians, and finally stampeding through the small Kansas town of Abilene (very little of which apparently they left standing). I didn't notice that the credit titles said who, or whose, they were.

Three men were responsible for the story of *The Crowd Roars*, and I wonder how long it took them to work out the idea that the boxer-hero (ROBERT TAYLOR) should be training at the farmhouse of a gambler whose daughter (MAUREEN O'SULLIVAN), arriving unexpectedly, should find the boxer-hero in his bath reading *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. The beautiful intricacy of this situation suggests the loving touch of several hands. If this were a British quota picture the girl would of course break right into the bathroom so as to make sure of wringing the ultimate giggle from everybody in the sixpenny seats; but no, *The Crowd Roars* is an M-G-M smasheroo, and throws restraint overboard only at the right moments.

The right moments, that is, for this kind of story. It has everything, because it has so obviously been given everything; that is what people who

notice these things are inclined to resent a little. The climax, for instance, has been nicely calculated to combine the suspense of the last-minute rescue of the heroine with the suspense of the hero's crucial boxing-match, either



BEAUTY AND THE BEEF

Ivy Preston JOAN BENNETT

one of which by itself is usually considered enough to keep the customers quivering. But there is some good stuff here too for the comparatively few customers who like to recognise how and why they are being made to quiver: the way the atmosphere is heightened by brief interpolated shots of people



AN IMPECUNIOUS PATER

Brian McCoy FRANK MORGAN
Tommy McCoy ROBERT TAYLOR

in the crowd ("the crowd roars") is excellent.

As far as plot is concerned, what we have here is basically the old boxing success-story, complicated by two things: a good deal of shady work behind the scenes, engineered mostly by *Jim Cain* (EDWARD ARNOLD); and the fact that the hero, *Tommy McCoy*, is plainly understood to be fighting only till he has made enough money to stop. Several secondary parts are admirably done, notably *Tommy's* shiftless father (FRANK MORGAN) and the champion who first trained him (WILLIAM GARGAN). But why bother with all this, when what so many of the fans have come to look at is the hair on Mr. TAYLOR's chest?

Other films I have seen this fortnight include *The Last Night*, a Soviet picture about the eve of the Russian Revolution; *Three Blind Mice*, in which LORETTA YOUNG, JOEL MCCREA, DAVID NIVEN, MARJORIE WEAVER, STUART ERWIN and others behave agreeably and quite amusingly in the most expensive surroundings; *Fools for Scandal*, which I thought a sad disappointment and a waste of CAROLE LOMBARD and FERNAND GRAVET; and *Three Men and a Girl*.

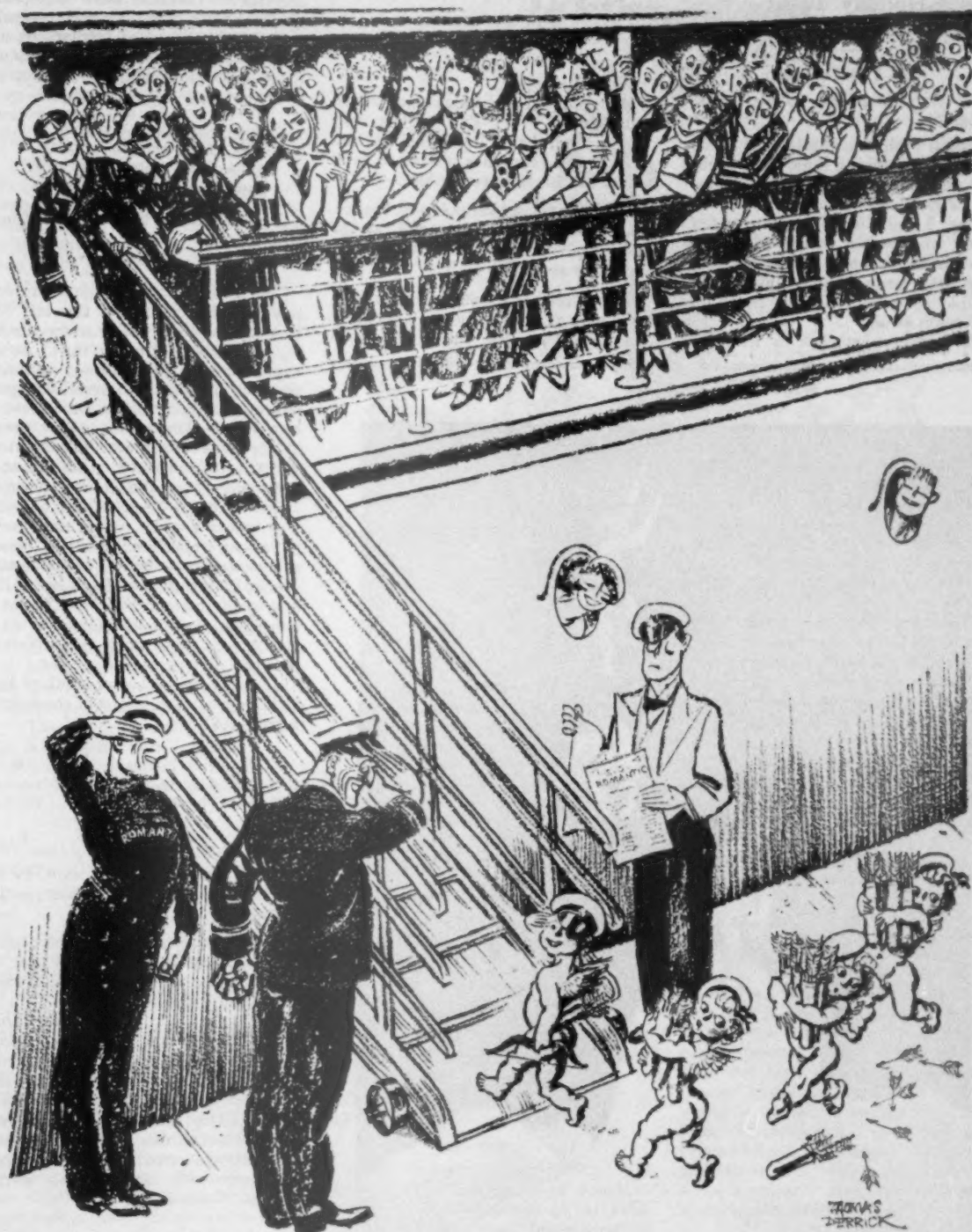
The Last Night is worth seeing for its climax alone, which is first-rate. Into a station bristling with Red soldiers creeps a train; they believe, but are not sure, that it is full of White reinforcements. An old woman approaches it alone and finds that after all it carries friends. That's all, but it could not be better done or more effective.

An impenitent admirer of the RITZ Brothers, I much enjoyed *Three Men and a Girl*, in which they devastate (by implication) almost the whole field of light entertainment. If you are one of the people who think (e.g.) that *Snow White* is the twentieth century's most deeply moving, tender and significant work of art, you'd better stay away from this. It suffers a little from a tendency to treat the plot as if it mattered, but most of it is very funny indeed. R. M.

An Impending Apology

"Author of 'R.F.D.', recent and popular Boob-of-the-Month Club selection."
Caption under Photograph in Canadian Paper.

"Lieut. Schwartz, the Swiss Army officer on a horseback tour of Ireland, passed through Loughrea and Gort on his way through Loughrea and Gort."—*Irish Paper*.
He couldn't have chosen a better route.



WANTED ON VOYAGE

Holiday Tasks

I.—Punctuation (continued)

(2) The Comma

Are there any semi-colons in the Psalms?

I begin with this challenging query, Bobby, in the faint hope of seducing your attention from that *éclair*, starfish, or homicide romance. It is misleading, I confess, for in our lecture to-day we propose to deal first with the common comma. This is a small thing but a large subject, and it is just possible that we shall not reach the semi-colon at all.

The common comma is the most

useful and, in some ways, the most difficult of stops. Here is one—take a good look at it.

What an object!

Many millions of commas are written and printed every day. Much may depend upon them. In a recent election address the candidate, giving a brief account of his life, wrote thus:—

"I served in Gallipoli and France, and, having been wounded, at the Admiralty. I was for two years private secretary to X."

The printer put a comma instead of a full stop after Admiralty. This made it appear that the writer had been

wounded at the Admiralty and had spent half the War as a private secretary. Commas have done more mischief than that. They have stultified the intentions of Parliament and cost the Crown much money. So you must care about commas, Bobby.

There is a song here, I feel:—

"Boys with wise Mommas
Care about their commas;
All sucking Solons
Care about colons . . ."

But we have no time to finish it now.

* * * * *

The comma, as you must at once have perceived, is like the tail of a small pig, cut off, and therefore drooping. A *small* pig, mark that. It is a Greek word (from *κομνταιν*, to strike or cut), and meant originally a piece cut off, a short clause or phrase or fragment. The colon (*κωλον*) was a longer piece or member. The "period" was the full sentence. One old authority says that the colon "occupied twice as much time as the comma." The words comma, colon and period have been transferred from the "pieces" of a sentence to the stops which mark them off. But this brief and enthralling historical introduction may serve to assist you, Bobby, when you are madly striving to remember the difference between a comma and a colon.

If not, you had better think of them as badges of rank in one of the fighting services. Look—

,	;	:	•
Private Comma	Lance-Corporal Semicolon	Corporal Colon	Sergeant Full Stop
*	*	*	*

It is possible, though rare, to find them all in the same sentence; and all correct:—

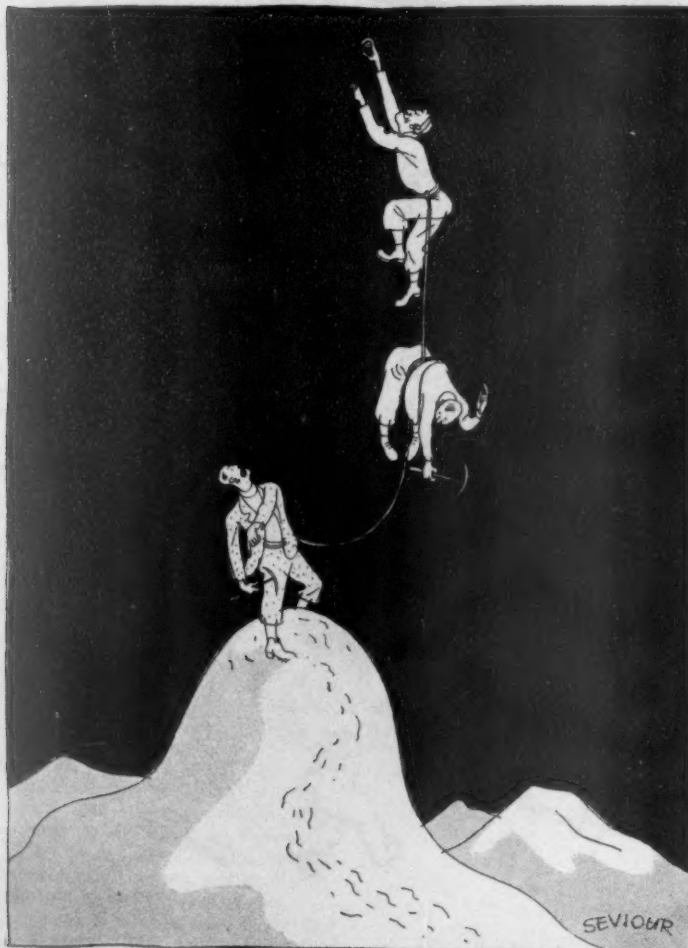
"And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also."

Genesis i. 16.

"Now when Job's three friends heard of all this evil that was come upon him, they came every one from his own place; Eliphaz the Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite: for they had made an appointment together to come to mourn with him and to comfort him."—*Job ii. 11.*

* * * * *

There is no space here for a full account of the comma and its conun-



"It's NO GOOD—HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND A WORD OF ENGLISH."

drums. In the great FOWLER* there are many yards thereon, with horrible examples. There is a good clear summary (for the purposes of letter-writing) in Mr. REGINALD SKELTON'S *Higher Business Correspondence*, an admirable work, which should be on every director's table and at every secretary's bedside.

The Oxford English Dictionary says:

"The function of the comma is to make clear the grammatical structure, and hence the sense, of the passage; one of the means by which this is effected in actual speech is a short pause; hence the comma is often inaccurately said to be merely the mark of such a pause."

Look also at the *ABC of English Usage* (TREBLE AND VALLINS). In these and other works you must make your own researches, Bobby. It is our modest aim to galvanize your sluggish attention in the future and to fill you with remorse for the negligence of past years. Now we shall merely madden you with a miscellaneous exercise and example or two.

EXERCISE

Are any of the following (a) correct, (b) passable, (c) actionable, (d) indictable?

- (a) A hot wet clinging hand.
- (b) A hot, wet, clinging, hand.
- (c) A hot, wet, clinging hand.
- (d) The jolly German Ambassador.
- (e) The jolly, German, Ambassador.
- (f) The jolly, German Ambassador.
- (g) A bleak financial outlook.
- (h) A bleak, financial, outlook.
- (i) A bleak, financial outlook.

Answer

We are not going to argue much about this. We just tell you:

(a) is obviously wrong (we shan't say why).

(d) and (g) are obviously right, though they look like (a).

(c) is delicious.

(f) and (i), though they look like (c), are foul.

(b), (e) and (h) are beyond the pale.

No argument, now.

Well, perhaps a hint or two. . . .

The difference between (c) and (f) (or (i)), Bobby, is that in (f) and (i) you could not use "and" instead of the comma. Or, in more portentous language, "the last adjective is in closer relation to the substantive than the preceding ones." In such situations omit the comma. You might say "A hot and wet and clinging hand"; but

* *Modern English Usage*.



"AND TO ALL THOSE WILLING WORKERS WHO HAVE HELPED TO MAKE THE FÊTE SUCH A SUCCESS, I SHOULD LIKE TO TAKE OFF MY HAT."

you could not say "The jolly and German Ambassador" or "A bleak and financial outlook." See?

(j) "The author who is an M.P. is mad."

(k) "The author, who is an M.P., is mad."

Answer :

These two sentences, Bobby, will show you the importance of punctuation and the awful power of the little comma. Either may be correct—if what is written is what is meant. But they are worlds apart. In (j) the "who" defines the author, and the sentence

means (1) the particular author who is an M.P. is mad, or (2) *any* author who is an M.P. is mad. In (k), because of the comma, the "who" to "M.P." words are merely parenthetical. The information that the mad author is an M.P. is thrown in casually, and the sentence would be complete without it. Thus, from the same words, you may draw three distinct meanings. Yet people still say to me, "What fun it must be to be a writer!" and wonder why we worry about stops.

No more now; we weary—we weaken: Next week? the colon! and semicolon; A-P; H,

Words and Music

I HAVE been asked by the Central Electricity Board (you know, the people you get when you want Scotland Yard and think the number is whitehall 2121) not to reveal—

In the interests of accuracy and the Central Electricity Board (in whose interests, than which, etc., needless to say) I should perhaps put that sentence a different way round. The truth is this—

I have not been asked by the Central Electricity Board to reveal—see the difference? Cute, isn't it?—the story of the origin of that famous and much-loved song *Down Where the Twilight Unfolds in the Back of the Long Wyoming Trail to Tipperary*, but I propose to do so, right and left.

Like so many great works that have hit the public slap in the emotions, it was written on the back of an envelope such as may be obtained by the two-and-one-twelfth dozen at any stationer's for a few pence. I was walking up and down on the top deck of a trolley-bus with my famous collaborator, Manny Thumpstein, who has more music in his little finger than you have in yours, when one of the men whose feet we were constantly tripping over happened to remark, purely in the course of conversation, to his neighbour:

"Gosh, I wish I was back down where the twilight unfolds

in the back of the long Wyoming trail to the bogs of Tipperary."

"Unless you want to catch your death of cold," replied his neighbour, who appeared to boast medical knowledge of some kind, "you keep out of bogs."

At this point the conductor, with his prosaic "All fares, please," interrupted a conversation which I have no doubt was pretty well over anyway. But I had heard all I needed. For my trained mind it was enough.

"Manny," I cried, gripping his arm, "what a sawng that would make, without the bogs!"

"I got a nice rich note I could set the word 'bogs' to," objected Manny, whose tendency to introduce the sordid realities of life into sentimental sawngs is one that I am at all times concerned to stifle.

"No," I said firmly, "I don't like bogs. Bogs is out. But the rest of it's unbeatable! Manny, I can see the tears running down everybody's cheeks!"

I had had a letter that morning from a Stanley W. Cabrank, a neighbour of mine, protesting against the way I was always having my bath too full and causing the water from the overflow pipe to splash on the ground below and wake up his canaries. Little did the sender of this gloomy



"'IT THE BLOKE BE'IND; IT WERE MEANT FOR 'IM.'"



"GOSH! FIVE DOWN TO A BAG LIKE THAT!"

and captious missive foresee the use to which it would be put!

I still had it in my pocket, having forgotten to tear it up with an oath. Fortunate omission! I said to Manny: "Manny, lend me a pencil."

What I had failed to remember was that Manny never carried a pencil because it spoiled the set of his ear. "What do you take me for," he now demanded indignantly, "a writer or sump'n?"

We seemed to have reached an impasse! (All the exclamation-marks in this article are by kind permission of the Western Brothers, but the italics are mine. I got millions of 'em.) A beautiful sawng was about to be lost to posterity, or at any rate prosperity, for the lack of a horse-shoe nail and a ha'porth of tar!

Suddenly Manny had an inspiration. "Maybe if we got off this bus," he suggested, "conditions would be more favourable. We might stumble on a post-office with a pen and ink in it."

To make a long story longer, that is what we did. Almost immediately, by a stroke of the greatest good fortune we stumbled on a post-office, and it was there, among people heedlessly writing telegrams and buying prosaic stamps, that was committed to envelope the first laughably rough version of a sawng that was to become enshrined in the hearts of people in forty-eight continents, or however many there are.

Not, however, without dust and heat. One of our arguments, I remember, was about old-fashioned mothers. "We need a spot of old-fashioned mother in here," Manny

announced when I had got to the third or fourth line of the chorus. "So far the tears are only at half-cock. I can sense it, partner. We need something about kissing an old-fashioned mother."

"What's an old-fashioned mother doing," I asked, "down where the twilight unfolds in the back of the long Wyoming trail to Tipperary? Are the dogies pulling her in a bath-chair?"

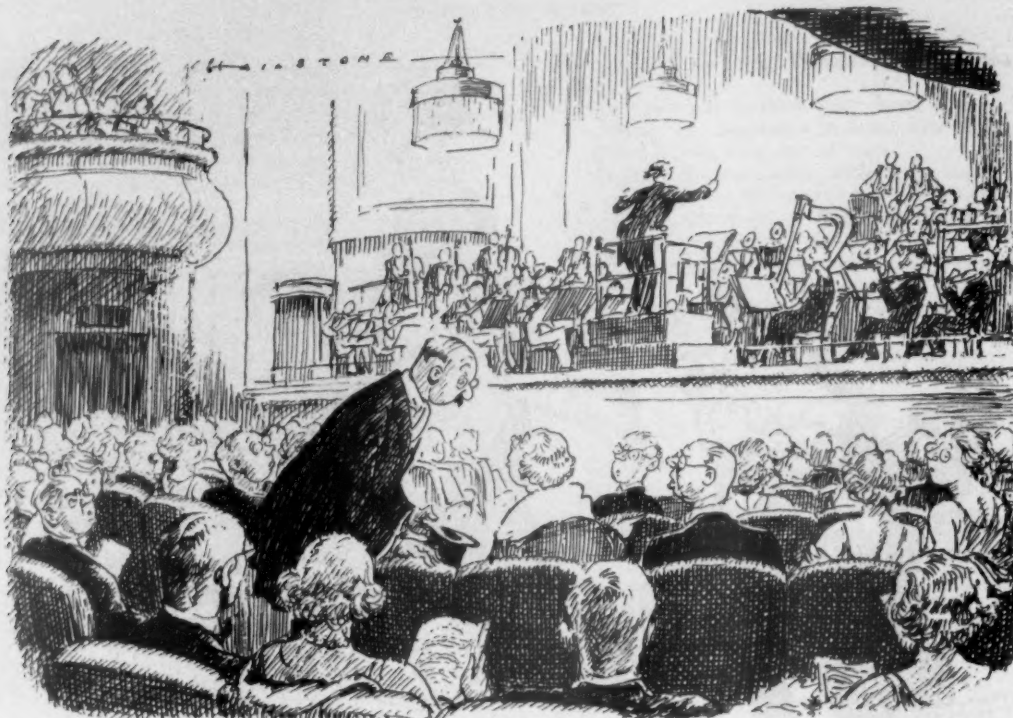
But Manny stuck to it that we needed an old-fashioned mother, and I had a job to keep her out. In the end we compromised on a couple of coyotes.

Manny takes a long time to get steamed up into the mood for producing music, but it comes in the end, and just as we were working on the last line ("Down where the twilight unfolds in the back of the long Wyoming trail to Tipperary") I could see he was growing restless. "I got to get to a piano," he said, humming to himself.

By the greatest good fortune there was one just outside on a cart. Little did the street musician in charge of it realise that the man who shoved him aside and set to work, note by miraculous note (only five in all, of course—the public can't remember a chorus with more than five), was the great Manny Thumpstein!

Such then was the romantic genesis of the sawng that later became, with the words and music changed, what singing circles now know as "Rule, Britannia." It proved, alas! to be Manny's swan-sawng, for soon afterwards he was unlucky enough to lose (in the post) the little finger he had all his music in.

R. M.



"BEETHOVEN'S FIFTH SYMPHONY . . . THERE—I KNEW WE SHOULD BE LATE!"

Footwear for Food

(To Sheila)

FROM themes of pure and lofty brow
Though such are normally my line
I turn, for it's the fact that now
I hope to celebrate the cow
That ate those socks of mine.

The sun was high; the day was hot;
I lingered by the river's brim;
It was a calm sequestered spot;
The water sparkled and, why not,
I thought I'd have a swim.

I sank and rose, I rose and sank,
I plashed about in sheer delight;
Hard by my garments on the bank
A peaceful cow looked on and drank
In the unwonted sight.

I saw the pensive creature munch
Something that seemed a grateful feast,
Yet no premonitory hunch
Warned me of what composed its lunch
In time to larn the beast.

'Twas only later that I saw,
Seeking my hose to put them on,
My last sock pendent from its jaw,
And as I gazed a final chaw
Came, and the pair had gone.

To say I gave my feelings vent
In hasty words would not be true;
I felt with philosophic bent
The act would bring its punishment,
Nor was the footwear new;

The thought moreover struck my brain
With a most soft and healing touch
That, had it for example ta'en
A liking to my bags, the pain
Would have been graver, much.

'Tis for the cow I fear, for though
It might with luck absorb my hose
The thing I really wish to know
Is, How do my suspenders go?
How is it tackling those?

DUM-DUM.



THE MASTER-SINGER OF NUREMBERG



THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



"MUMMIE, I'M RUNNING IN THE 440 AT THE SPORTS!"
 "GOOD; THEN WE SHAN'T NEED EARLY LUNCH."

Women's Club Meeting

"Mrs. Shumaker, I should like you to meet my guest from England, Miss Enid Trent. . . . Mrs. Shumaker is our Lady President, Miss Trent, and has done some very wonderful work for the women of our city."

"How do you do?"

"How do you do, Miss Brent? Now you mustn't believe everything that our friend here, Mrs. Fielding, says about me—she's a very lovely person who just can't see anything but what's fine and worthwhile in anybody."

"Certainly I can't in you, Lydia."

"Honey, you make me blush! . . . Now tell me about yourself, Miss Brent. How long have you been with us and how do you like us?"

"This young lady's a writer, Lydia, and I know she's planning to write a book about us, though she pretends she's not."

"Well I'll say! Now isn't that interesting?"

"Miss Trent, if you'll excuse me for a moment I'll leave you with Mrs. Shumaker while I see about the table arrangements. I know Mrs. Shumaker will take good care of you."

"I surely will. I'd like to have you know some of our members, Miss Brent; we have some very fine women among us to-night. . . . Helen, I want to present Miss Brent, an English writer who is over here collecting material for a book about the States. Miss Brent, this is Mrs. Bacon Ventimiglia. . . . Mrs. Seymour Cohen . . . and Miss Susan Rickey, the very talented organist at our Episcopalian church."

"How do you do? . . . How do you do? . . . How do you do?"

"How do you do, Miss Breck? I am happy to know you. May I ask how long you have been with us?"

"I have been here for about three months."

"Isn't that grand? Miss Breck, I'd like to have you meet my friend Mrs. Ostertag, and Mrs. Adams. . . . Girls, this is Miss Breck, one of the famous women writers from the other side."

"How do you do?"

"I just love your English writers, Miss Brick. I have just finished reading *The Citadel*. And before that I was reading a most interesting book about your ex-King Edward Eight."

"Would it be tactless to ask how people feel about that on the other side, Miss Prick?"

"Well, some people feel one way and some feel another. It just depends, you know. Some don't feel anything at all."

"I felt terribly. The tears were running down my cheeks all the time I was listening to that speech over the radio. . . ."

"Susan, pardon me—I want Miss Prick to meet Louise."

"Well, I've so much enjoyed knowing you, Miss Prick, I shall look out for your book."

"I'm afraid it's not very likely that there will be a b— How do you do? How do you do?"

"Miss Frick, I want you to meet a very lovely person whom I know you will enjoy—Miss Natalie Bodfish."



"YES, WE'VE MECHANISED OUR WAR DANCE."

"My people came from England. I still have an aunt living in Leeds, Yorkshire. Perhaps you know her?"

"I live in London myself, but—"

"My aunt's own name is not Bodfish but Hooper. Of course Bodfish is an old English name too, isn't it?"

"I don't happen to know anyone of that name personally, but of course there are so many names. . . ."

"I know it. I am always hearing names that are quite new to me. Is your own name a fairly common one in England?"

"Oh, quite common."

"There, you see! Yet I had never heard it before. Perhaps there were never any Cricks who emigrated to the States from England."

"No, perhaps not."

"I hear you are collecting material for a book. May I ask what name you write under, Miss Crick?"

"I write under my own name."

"Is that so? I shall look out for your work. . . . And what do you think of this mechanised civilisation of ours—all our automobiles and telephones? I suppose it all seems very new to you?"

"Well, we do happen to have a telephone at home, but . . ."

"Ah, well, in a cultured home. But here every workman has his automobile. . . . I was just telling Miss Crick, Jane, that in this country every workman has his automobile. Miss Crick is a novelist from England. . . . Mrs. Hyman, Miss Crick."

"Why, Miss Cricks, how strange that you should happen to be with us to-night! I hear we have the pleasure of having another countrywoman of yours as our guest—and a writer too. Yet often we go for months without having the privilege of entertaining a guest from overseas. You must certainly get acquainted if you have not already done so—two Britishers alone in a strange land."

"Dr. Livingstone, I presume?"

"Pardon me, Miss Cricks?"

"I said 'Dr. Livingstone, I presume?'"

"Dr. Livingstone? I don't quite follow you."

"Oh, that's just a little joke."

"Is that so? They do say that English humour is somewhat different from our idea of a good laugh. But you must certainly meet this other British lady; I understand she's a very well-known writer over there; you've probably met her already. I haven't

met her myself yet, but I know Mrs. Shumaker, our Lady President, will be happy to present you to her. I hear that she's written a splendid book of impressions about the States and is altogether a very lovely person. I don't know exactly the name of the book she's written, but no doubt you will. I'm told she's famous over there in England. . . . Ah, Mrs. Shumaker, you're just the woman I've been looking for! I want to have Miss Cricks here meet our other British guest, Miss Trent. Miss Cricks is a writer too and I know they would enjoy one another."

Oswald Goes Under

"Do you know this young man?" Everard Galliproof inquired, passing me a holograph portrait (reproduced herewith) of a cheerful youth apparently engaged in biting the end off a cigarette.

I knew him very well. He was the boy who lived on Everard's blotting-paper, and had lived there as long as I could remember—a simple-minded but not unattractive young man who

had during the passage of the years inevitably collected the name of Oswald.



"What about him?" I asked. It seemed to me that Everard was treating Oswald with more than his usual consideration. As a rule the child appears only in odd corners, and he is by no means encouraged to bring himself to the notice of visitors. Now his creator was positively thrusting him at me.

"He's dead," Everard said shortly. "Dead?"

"As the proverbial door-nail. He has been killed by the vagaries of women's fashions. In a way it's rather a sad story."

"You might as well tell me now," I said, settling down for the evening, "and get it over."

Everard put the sketch away carefully in his blotting-pad. "I don't know if you remember how poor little Oswald came into being," he began. "As a matter of fact he was a bit of a disappointment. We—I mean I—was hoping for a girl, you know—a glamorous young English débutante type of eighteen or so, with a cluster of golden curls and delicately-chiselled features and all that. In fact I had my chisel all ready in case the features weren't sufficiently delicate. But, well, things turned out differently. It happens often enough, I suppose." He heaved a deep sigh.

"It began with the golden curls," he went on after a pause. "I don't know if you've ever tried drawing girls' hair from the side, but it's not an art you can learn in a day or so. I spent a lot of time reading through *RUSKIN's Elements of Drawing* to see if he had anything to say about drawing girls' hair from the side, but he wasn't helpful at all. Of course girls wore their hair differently in *RUSKIN's* day; all the same I'm rather inclined to think the Master funk'd the problem."

"There was an obvious way out," I suggested.

"Please," Everard besought me, raising a minatory hand, "don't anticipate. Quite apart from the question of the golden curls there was something about the delicate chiselling of the features that I couldn't cope with. I tried to insist, as it were, on the youthful curves of—er—youth; and the result was that, instead of turning out a glamorous young débutante, the face always resolved itself into a comic-paper office-boy. Resolved itself, in fact, into Oswald."

"I fought against it for a time. I even gave up drawing faces altogether, which was a big sacrifice for me, and confined myself to fish, telegraph-poles, interlaced triangles and other significant doodles; but in the end I always had that longing for the golden-haired débutante, and every time I only turned out Oswald."

"So finally, you understand, I gave in to the inevitable. If I must draw Oswald, I said to myself, I will at least draw him well. And year by year he has blossomed into some new beauty—first the round cherubic cheek, which is pink when I have any red pencil handy; then the realistic little tuft of hair at the back; then the

cigarette; then the collar and tie. In a year or so I expect he would have worn horn-rimmed glasses and sported the most distinctive of club colours round his neck; or perhaps he would have picked up a District Messenger's pill-box or an exophthalmic goitre."

Everard sat silent for a moment, contemplating an infinite vista of experimental Oswalds.

"And now," he resumed at length, "Oswald is no more. He is no longer necessary. The trend of fashion, as I said, has killed him. At last I have learnt to achieve the débutante."

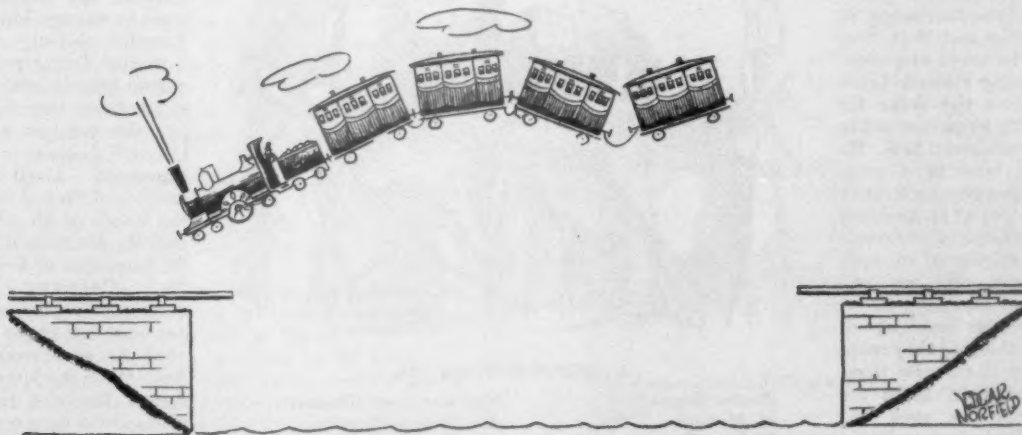
He opened his blotter and produced a new sketch (also reproduced herewith). "You see," he expatiated, "how



simple the creation of a débutante has now become. There are the golden curls, there are the finely-chiselled features, and there too is the shady summer hat, like some gargantuan soup-plate, which effectively conceals everything except a fragment of chin and the nape of the neck."

He retrieved the drawing and proudly replaced it in his blotter, though you could see that it was but the first of thousands.

"And yet somehow," he confessed, "I feel that if ever women go back to hats the shape of pudding-basins or lamp-shades or—or baskets, I shan't be sorry to see Oswald come back into his own. He's got more character, somehow, than these silly females."



"ALWAYS ECONOMISING; NOW THEY'VE TAKEN THE BRIDGE AWAY."

At the Play

"THOU SHALT NOT—" (PLAYHOUSE)

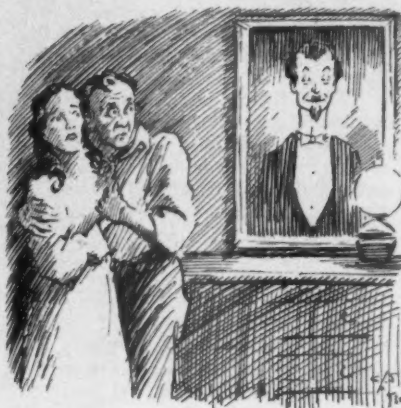
THIS is a revival, by the People's National Theatre, of the English version of ZOLA's *Thérèse Raquin* (translation by ALEXANDER TEIXEIRA DE MATTOS). It is strong pitiless drama put over by a team who know their business. Starting gently, it works up slowly (too slowly, I think, for the theatre) to a point at which the full force of events is suddenly let loose, and from there it is very effective; not a great play, but the central situation is cast-iron and the logic of the end is approached with relentless consistency.

Madame Raquin (Miss NANCY PRICE) has moved her little drapery shop from the country to Paris, so that her son, *Camille* (Mr. BRIAN OULTON), can become a clerk there. If it would have pleased him better she would probably have moved it to Timbuctoo, for although she is a dominant firm-minded old lady *Camille* is the one hopeless chink in her armour. He is a weak, weedy young man for ever fussing and giggling over his health; and she has married him to her niece, *Thérèse* (Miss CATHLEEN NESBITT), who has lived all her life with the *Raquins*.

Camille's great friend, also from his country childhood, is a painter named *Laurent* (Mr. HENRY OSCAR), a frequent visitor to the shabby bed-sitting-room above the shop; and when *Thérèse*, reacting from a marriage which is one only in name, becomes his mistress, their position grows impossibly embarrassing, in spite of the fact that they manage to avoid suspicion. One Sunday *Camille* takes them down the Seine for lunch. They row him out in a boat and drown him. He is found later in a weir. When they get back they pitch a story of an accident in which *Laurent* had made gallant attempts to save his friend, and no one dreams of doubting it.

But things are not so good for them as they seem on paper. *Camille* dead comes between them far more than he ever did alive. Their nerves begin to go, not so much from

remorse as fear. *Thérèse* ceases to be *Laurent's* mistress. Then a year later they are persuaded by *Madame Raquin*, who is anxious for *Thérèse's* health, to marry; and it is from the horror of their wedding-night that the play takes on a new and fearful acceleration.



A FRIGHTFUL LIKENESS

Thérèse Raquin . . . MISS CATHLEEN NESBITT
Laurent MR. HENRY OSCAR

We see them shepherded to their bedroom with the innocent improprieties of rural convention. Wretched, and seeing *Camille* everywhere, they sit shivering over the fire, hysteria mounting, until at last *Laurent*, re-

pulsed by *Thérèse*, snatches down his portrait of *Camille* and shouts a maniac confession to it. Old *Madame Raquin*, disturbed by his voice, comes in, learns the truth about her son's death, and falls in a paralytic stroke at their feet.

In the last scene, and it is certainly powerful, their love has changed to hate. They bicker incessantly and all that holds them together is the dread that *Madame Raquin* will regain her speech and give them away. When her two old friends, *M. Michaud* (Mr. MORRIS HARVEY) and *M. Grivet* (Mr. A. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT), are visiting her one night she recovers enough to trace on the table-cloth, "*Thérèse and Laurent have—*" before her paralysis returns; and when the visitors have gone the murderers, having tried to kill each other, take poison. As the curtain falls *Madame Raquin* sits alone by their bodies, a shaft from the lamp lighting up her face, which is utterly rigid and expressionless except for the terrible triumph in her eyes. And how much Miss PRICE can say in this limited medium!

The interesting thing about the play is that although its characters are convincing they attract very little sympathy. One is sorry in a mild way that *Camille* was pushed overboard, and of course one is sorry for the old lady; but not very. And ZOLA, I am sure, meant this. His play is not a tragedy but a demonstration of ugly human behaviour; it grips but it doesn't harrow. It is a slice of scientific Grand Guignol.

The acting is very good. Miss PRICE is admirable, whether she is showing us the quiet domestic old lady who lives for her son or the terrible old lioness who lives to avenge him. Miss NESBITT cleverly suggests a woman living unhappily within herself, half-dead in spirit from the failure of her one escape; and Mr. OSCAR's *Laurent* is as well conceived. Until he falls overboard *Camille* is safe in the hands of Mr. OULTON; and Mr. HARVEY's delightful Inspector of Police and Mr. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT's elderly business man are what one hopes and expects to see in every Paris bus. With the help of Miss JOYCE REDMAN (a precocious niece) they colour the background with great discretion. ERIC.



A MESSAGE FROM MA

Thérèse Raquin MISS CATHLEEN NESBITT
M. Michaud MR. MORRIS HARVEY
Madame Raquin MISS NANCY PRICE
M. Grivet MR. A. BROMLEY-DAVENPORT

The Beauties of Bridge

V.—More Manners

WHEN playing Bridge let Bridge be all your care.
Some players are most absent when they're there.
Such ghosts and wraiths are partners but in name;
They share your table, never join your game.
Muriel, whose languid limbs and queenly head
So mask a soul all soda and blacklead,
Whose Mona Lisa smile so lures a man
Bump up against her mind of Mary Ann,
Finds Bridge no respite from her household cares,
Her hands play Contract but her soul's downstairs.
Far from the falling cards her eye will rove
Back to the butcher and that worrying stove.
When some trumped ace has fallen, when some grand
Tremendous crisis of the game's at hand,
One knows from Muriel's saintly yearning look
She's really in the larder, telling Cook.

Bad guests at Bridge are moved to go or stay
Not by the clock but by their luck at play.
When faced by loss they're wide awake and choose
To cry revenge until the hostess lose.
On other nights, when their ill-luck is hers,
At once they're up and in their coats and furs,
As keen to carry off the loot they've made
As Bond Street gangsters in a smash-grab raid.
From their fatigues their fortunes one can guess—
So roused by loss, so wearied by success.
Two thousand up—the wife begins to yawn;
Two thousand down—they're in your home till dawn.

Some wives and husbands get their wants made known
By little signs and symbols all their own.
Who stoops to this should never touch a card;
From honest Bridge all private pacts are barred.
Only a trickster makes mysterious calls,
And the right place for Zancig is the halls.
Fair bids should follow an accepted mode,
A known convention, not a secret code.
All should feel free when once a hand's been played
To ask the foe just what their calls conveyed.

Dogs in the Bridge-room can be hideous bores,
Furred smelly pests that whine and scratch at doors;
And nothing quite so much one's patience tries
As Contract bidding mixed with kennel cries.
“(Down, Fido, down!) Let's see, now—did I deal?”
“(Cushion!)—I call ‘One Diamond’—(Heel, Sir, heel!)”
“You called ‘One Spade’—(yelp! yelp!)—and you've declined.”
“I'll— Fluffums wants the garden. Jack, d'you mind?”

Meanwhile, one's judgment fails, one's memory fogs.
Who could play Contract in this Isle of Dogs?

Smoke if you wish when playing, but take heed
To blend discretion with the noxious weed.
A good cigar gives interest to the air;
That fine male tang is favoured by the Fair;
But pipes may make their dainty nostrils grieve
And never should be lit except with leave.
Far from my table be that ill-bred youth
Who talks, the gasper dangling from his mouth,
Coughs at the smoke and, careless in extreme,

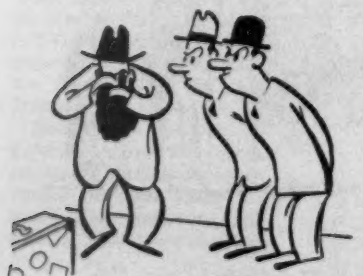
Drops all his ashes like an English team.
Ted, whom I've mentioned, always smokes some type
Of foul mundungus from his filthy pipe,
Which smarts the eyes and clings to women's hair—
A dark smoke nuisance to each lovely play'r.
As battleships contrive to fire unseen,
He wages Bridge behind a thick black screen.
Once when dark clouds were swirling round his head
And “where d' we go for honey now?” asked Ted,
“Go where you like for honey,” sighed Louise,
“But please, dear Edward, don't smoke out the bees.”

Good sense and judgment—these alone can teach
In Bridge the limits of permitted speech.
In the great club-rooms every word is banned
While tongue-tied members play each anxious hand.
At home the laws of Crockford aren't in place,
And social Bridge should wear a smiling face;
And yet how few possess that happy touch
And neither talk too little nor too much!
Some rattle on like conjurers talking hard,
And without patter can't produce a card;
Others will nip all discourse in the bud—
Trappists whose icy silence chills the blood.
This much is clear: 'tis better to be mute
Than to let discourse swell into dispute.
Bridge is no forum for abstruse debate
On highbrow books or grave affairs of state.
Talk should at most a minor interest claim
And, like mild wine, add flavour to the game—
Not like that sauce which cloaks the dubious dish
When Soho poisoners souse the Sunday fish.
So soft stage music makes an audience keen;
The same tune, played more loudly, drowns the scene.



“... AND THIS IS MY HUSBAND'S LITTLE DEN.”

A Bad Show



THE events which it is my fixed intention now to relate occurred at the time when the bulbuls begin to turn from green to yellow and the musquash fields are a sea of golden grain. Particularly is this the case in the fertile plain which, lying to the south of the Mingo mountains, is watered by the pleasant river Swim. This river forms a part of the frontier between Tierra del Fuego and Pongolia; but the other and greater part of the frontier consists of an imaginary line (rather like the Equator), with a barbed-wire fence on the Tierra del Fuego side, and on the Pongolian side nothing, I am sorry to say, but a very shaky trellis-work ornamented by rambler roses.

I apologise for beginning this account with a lesson in elementary geography, but these facts are essential for a proper understanding of the incident which took place on the 15th of August, 1939, on the imaginary-line part of the frontier. This incident, with its subsequent repercussions, constitutes one of the most extraordinary episodes in the history of European diplomacy. As the Commander-in-Chief of the Tierra del Fuego Army, General Posteriori, remarked at the time, the whole affair was so dashed irregular.

The first news of the incident gave no hint of any departure from orthodoxy. Frontier guards on the Pongol-Tierra del Fuego border, reported Reuter, had been involved in a sharp skirmish near the town of Ho!—the exclamation-mark being a part of the appellation of the town and not an indication of excitement on the part of Reuter's correspondent. The Tierra del Fuego flag (still according to Reuter) had, it was alleged, been fired upon. Tierra del Fuego troops were massing behind the frontier.

On the next day the Tierra del Fuego Press printed an official account of the incident, in which it was claimed that two-hundred-and-fifty thousand Pongol troops had attacked a small detachment of Tierra del Fuego frontier guards and had been driven off with heavy losses. Nothing, you will agree, could have been more in order than that statement, and it may be said at once that throughout this unhappy affair the Government of Tierra del Fuego did their utmost to conduct the matter in a way befitting a civilised nation. From Pongolia, however, no word came of any incident whatever; in fact the whole of the official Pongolian newspaper was occupied that day, as it had been for several weeks past, by the results of the previous day's greyhound races and forecasts for those of the following evening. I may as well say straight away that in this affair the Pongolians with one accord behaved in an absolutely caddish manner.

On the 17th the Tierra del Fuego Ambassador to Pongolia delivered the following official communiqué:—

"The Government of the Republic of Tierra del Fuego has been informed of an incident on the frontier of our respective countries near the town of Ho! on the 15th of this month, in which Pongolian troops fired on the Tierra del Fuego flag. The Government of Tierra del Fuego, while anxious to do nothing which might lead to strained relations between this country and a friendly Power, wishes to make it clear that in all circumstances the integrity of Tierra del Fuego territory and the honour of the Tierra del Fuego flag will be maintained."

The reply to this Note was anxiously awaited, not only in Tierra del Fuego



DAVID LANGDON

but throughout the civilised world. Pongolia, however, appeared indifferent. No statement, official or otherwise, appeared in the Pongol Press, and the Pongol broadcasting stations made no break in their invariable programme of dance-music on gramophone records. On the 22nd of August, however, a letter arrived at the Tierra del Fuego Foreign Office bearing a Pongolian postmark (but no stamp). It was addressed to the Government of Tierra del Fuego, and it ran as follows:

*The Willows,
Pongoville,
Pongolia.
Tuesday.*

DEAR SIR OR MADAM,—I must apologise for my delay in replying to your letter of the 17th inst., but I have had a good deal of correspondence on my hands and my secretary is on holiday till September.

Re your complaint about the "incident" (as your Ambassador insists on calling it), I like your nerve. Admittedly one of our guards shot a hole in the flag on your Customs-House, but he only did it because the captain of the guard had bet him twenty cigarettes to an aspirin tablet that he couldn't hit it. When your men came rushing up making a ridiculous fuss he very sportingly offered to pay for a new flag; and your senior officer (General Electiones) would have done his country a better service if he had accepted instead of starting a fight; because the old flag, as I am credibly informed, was of an inferior quality and needed washing.

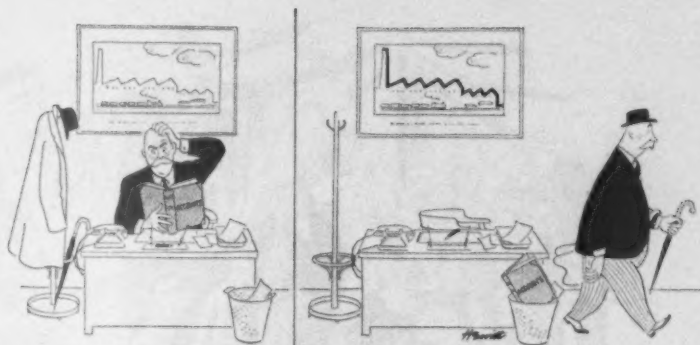
In conclusion, I can only say that we of Pongolia wish you everything you wish yourselves.

Yours very sincerely,

CLAUDIUS VAN T'ASPIDISTRA,
Minister for Fisheries and Foreign
Affairs.

To this extraordinary epistle the only possible reply was a dignified silence, which the Government of Tierra del Fuego accordingly maintained. General Posteriori, however, openly declared that it was an exceptionally bad show, and that he for one took a very poor view of the Pongolian Government. It was generally felt that this remark summed up the whole affair, and that it would be far the best course to refrain from any further mention of it. The final break of diplomatic relations between Tierra del Fuego and Pongolia, however, was caused three weeks later by a second Note (if such it can be called) from the Pongolians. It appeared in the Personal Column of *The Times*, and ran as follows:—

"TIERRA DEL FUEGO. — Mother



heartbroken by your continued silence. Can we not forget and forgive?—
PONGOLIA."

Tierra del Fuego troops are now massing behind the frontier.

Stars

"I KNEW it," said Edith, bursting excitedly into my study; "they are right again."

"Who?" I asked, laying down my pen and stopping trying to think of a word of nine letters meaning anathema to esquimaux Biblical prophet's supper.

"The stars," she said. "Seero in *The Weekly Mail* said that those born under the sign of Virgo would have trouble with somebody from another land to-day, and I have just had a most tremendous quarrel with Mrs. Johnson-Clitheroe in the Literary Society Committee over seed-cake. I said it was all left at the last opening social and that this year we ought to stick to currant or Swiss roll, but she said that seed-cake was all right if it was reasonably edible, and naturally I wasn't going to stand for that, because after all with those electric ovens, if you rely entirely on the thermometer thing without peeping inside every now and then, it is very easy to go too far, but apart from the underneath bit, which we scraped off, it was perfectly all right."

"But Mrs. Johnson-Clitheroe is of sound British stock," I protested. "I don't see that you can call her somebody from another land."

"She is just back from Wales," said Edith, "touring in their car."

Personally I have no faith in the stars, but our copy of *The Weekly Mail* happened to be lying on the table, and just for amusement I glanced at Seero's

page and learned with gratification that I was born under the sign of Taurus (April 21st-May 20th), and that I was to experience a severe disappointment in connection with sports or games that very evening. It was ridiculous of course, but for the moment my heart sank, because it happened that I was due to play Colonel Hogg in the final of our local billiards championship.

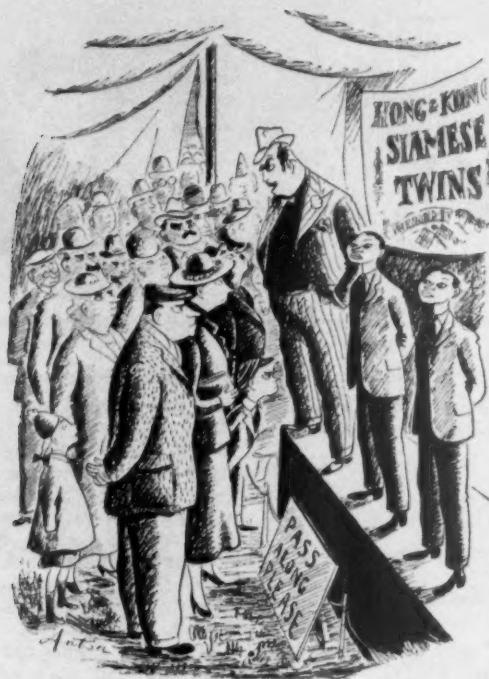
I tried to dismiss the idea that I would lose, but when we started our game I felt very depressed and the Colonel passed the first fifty while I was still lingering in the twenties. Usually the Colonel is rather a wild happy-go-lucky sort of player, but to-night he was taking about two minutes over each shot.

"The fault, dear Conkleshill," I murmured to myself, "lies not in your stars but in your jitteriness. It is perfectly ridiculous to suppose that a gang of stars whirring along millions of miles away can enable Colonel Hogg to win the game."

I picked up a little bit after that and reduced the Colonel's lead to a mere ten, and I was beginning to congratulate myself on giving Seero one in the eye when the Colonel made a break of forty-two, including seven flukes. After that I was completely converted, because Colonel Hogg is quite incapable of making forty-two without the help of the stars. His previous best break was twenty-nine, made when his opponent had popped out for a drink, and nobody had ever really believed it.

He ran out with a laboriously careful seven and heaved a sigh of relief.

"I was afraid you were going to win," he said, "because according to Seero I was due for a disappointment to-night, having been born under the sign of Taurus. You may have noticed that I was playing a bit more carefully than usual."



"WELL, THEY ARE SIAMESE AND THEY ARE TWINS—
AIN'T THEY?"

Scarecrow

THE mawkin's job
is scaring crows
where corn is growing
in neat rows.

And there he stands
for months on end
with neither enemy
nor friend
to interfere
and make him shirk
his all-important
job of work.

He never goes
to bed at night,
he never sleeps
and doesn't fight;
he doesn't mind
the rain and sun,
and he will never
up and run;
he never worries,
never rages
and never gets
a penny wages.

He wants no praise
and gets no blame,

he never knows
the curse of shame;
he has no need
to give rebuke
but rules the hill-tops
like a duke.

In dad's old hat
and flapping coat
he never does
a thing of note,
but all the same
in those neat rows
he does his best
at scaring crows.

And when I'm busy
singling beet
or rolling on
the forward wheat,
or when I'm worried
in the yard
and things are going
pretty hard,
I look across
to where His Grace is
and think how pleasant
to change places.

The Grievance

"QUICK, Aunt Mary, jump in here! The guard's going to blow his whistle. That's it. There's room in the middle."

"It's disgraceful. I shall certainly write to the railway company about it. I *know* we put two magazines in those corner-seats. And I *particularly* asked the porter to keep on the look out and make sure nobody took them."

"But Aunt Mary—"

"It's outrageous. I'm sure these ladies here will agree with me. My niece and I reserved two seats in a third-class compartment at least a quarter of an hour ago. I distinctly remember placing a library book in a corner-seat facing the engine. It had a blue cover."

"But, Aunt Mary—"

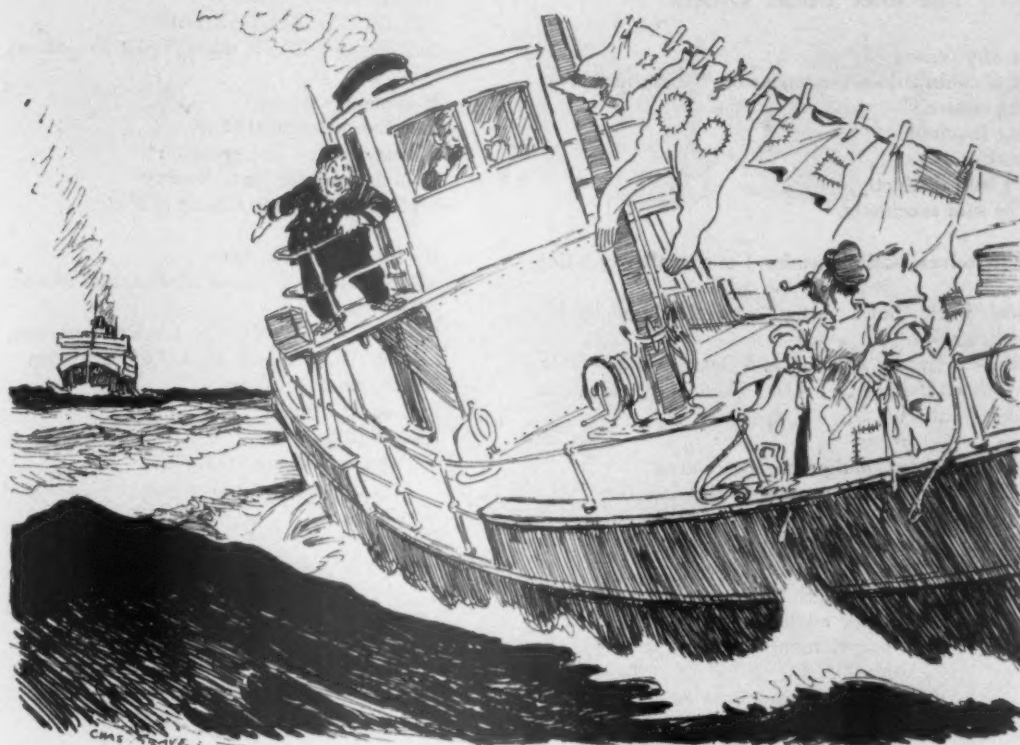
"We were careful to arrive at Victoria *well* before the time, and actually we were on the platform when the train came in so as to make certain of getting corner-seats. Sometimes I feel faint on a journey, but I find the air from an open window prevents this. Some people are nervous of travelling in a seat *facing* the engine, but I have never been. If one is going to be killed one is going to be, and that's all there is about it. I would much rather be killed outright than mangled."

"Well, anyhow, we left our suitcases on the seats to reserve them, and then we went to the restaurant to have some coffee. The waitress was very slow in bringing it, although I told her most *distinctly* we had a train to catch. She must have been quite five minutes. Girls in these days go about in a dream. I suppose their heads are full of some film nonsense. In my young days—"

"Aunt Mary—"

"Please don't keep interrupting me. Now you've made me lose the thread. What was I saying? Oh, yes, and when she *did* bring it the coffee was lukewarm. I would have sent for the manageress if there had been time, but there was only about three minutes left before the train went. So we paid the bill and hurried away."

"It took us about five minutes to find our compartment because the train had filled up and we couldn't see any carriage with the corner-seats unoccupied. But at last my niece noticed a compartment with our suitcases up on the rack. But there in our seats, the corner-seats which we had *reserved*, sat two ladies, if ladies they can be called."



"TAKE 'EM ALL IN, JOE, TILL THAT PASSENGER-SHIP'S GONE BY. I HAVE ME PRIDE."

"Aunt Mary——"

"There they sat as cool as you please in *our* seats! I was so taken aback at their effrontery that I couldn't speak. Just imagine, they must have *removed* our books when nobody was looking, because there they were, our books, lying on the rack beside our suitcases.

"I pointed out to them that the seats were ours. We had *reserved* them at least half an hour earlier, and I had myself asked the guard to keep his eye on them. For anyone to take them in such circumstances is a *most unheard-of thing*. I am not sure we couldn't have prosecuted them for theft. Of course I didn't *say* this, but I pointed out as politely as I could that the seats were *ours* and we *wished* to occupy them.

"Well, wouldn't you think that any *civilised* persons would have got up at once and apologised? There was plenty of room in the middle of the compartment and we had an absolutely just claim to the corner-seats. But no! These ladies, if ladies they can be called, *refused* to vacate the seats. They said they had found nothing on

the seats to reserve them—which of course was absurd, because I distinctly remember leaving a magazine on mine—a copy of *The Quiver*."

"But Aunt Mary——"

"It was their brazen-faced coolness which took my breath away. To sit there in *our* seats without so much as a blush and tell us that we had no right to them! Well, really, I was speechless. I told them that in over sixty years of travelling I had never met with such impoliteness and that if they still possessed consciences, which I very much doubted, I hoped they would consult them."

"Aunt Mary——"

"After that we picked up our suitcases and tried to find corner-seats in some other compartment. But by then it was nearly time for the train to go. We hurried up and down the train peering into carriages, which of course were no longer empty. It was really a most *trying* experience. What with the exertion of hurrying and the *insults* I had received from these ladies so-called I was quite out of breath and hardly knew what I was

doing. In fact I am only just beginning to recover myself now.

"Of course I know that some people make a *habit* of cutting it fine and leaving their seats to chance. But I am not like that, and I can't bear hurrying. We had taken special care to be in *plenty* of time and we reserved our seats at *least* twenty minutes before the train went. And then, if you please, these ladies, if ladies they can be called——"

"AUNT MARY——"

"What is it, Jean?"

"Aunt Mary, these *are* the ladies."

Grim Outlook for Parents

"Is it from irregular meals, or from cigarette smoking or from an unhealthy home? Or is your weak state hereditary—has it come down to you through your parents? In any case remove the cause."

From a Book on Medicine.

A Man's a Man for a' that

"IN THE SUPREME COURT, QUEENSLAND.
In the will of John Henry Irvin, late of Wilston, Brisbane, in the State of Queensland, Gentleman (formerly a Glass Blower), Deceased."



WET AND DRY

Careful Wife. "ARE YOU VERY WET, DEAR?"

Ardent Angler (turning up his flask). "NO; DRY AS A LIME-KILN—HAVEN'T HAD A DROP THESE TWO HOURS!"

Charles Keene, September 8th, 1877.

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The One Thing Needful

MR. JOHN MIDDLETON MURRY has written a book which is not very easy to describe and quite impossible adequately to criticise in a few words. Its title, *Heaven—and Earth* (CAPE, 10/6), suggests, if it does not define, the magnitude of the theme. Mr. MURRY sees our civilisation tottering on the brink of final disaster, which he believes can only be averted (if at all) by a renewal of religion; and by that he means not only Christianity in the widest sense (the Church invisible) but communism—also interpreted in a larger sense than its contemporary practitioners have given it. Here is a controversial thesis, but even those who cannot

accept all of Mr. MURRY's philosophy must be interested in his method of approach. He has "tried to reveal the growth of the modern world through the minds of some great men who experienced in act or imagination the travail of its becoming." These range from CHAUCER to MORRIS but are not all Englishmen, for MONTAIGNE, as the first conscious individualist, ROUSSEAU, GOETHE and MARX come into the picture. The chapters on ROUSSEAU and MARX, with that on MORRIS, whom Mr. MURRY reveres as the greatest (and last) of the true Socialists, are the best of all. That discernment comes through imagination belongs to his creed, but of CHAUCER and SHAKESPEARE his interpretation sometimes seems merely fanciful, while CROMWELL (or CARLYLE) has moved him to an apocalyptic manner at variance with his usual lucidity. His passionate sincerity is always to be admired.

The Price of Abbotsford

The dingiest aspect of a tottering feudalism is all too often the finance that underpins it—witness the case of *Sir Walter Scott, Bart.* (CONSTABLE, 18/-), which presents one of the most poignant pictures imaginable of territorial prestige maintained at too great a cost. Sir HERBERT GRIERSON, turning from his editorship of SCOTT's letters to write a Life which should supplement and correct LOCKHART's, emphasises at the outset how unnecessary it was for the novelist to assume the state he did. He then falls to sorting the Life's complicated strands—social, financial and psychological, signally aided by correspondence between SCOTT and CADELL which it is unlikely that LOCKHART would have revealed if he could. The result is a pathetic portrait of the man who mortgaged his publisher's security as well as his own, the man who made his son marry for money to sustain a position that was half Wardour Street décor and half a genuine stand on behalf of the poor and dependent. One cannot accept all Sir HERBERT's feats of iconoclasm, the debunking, for instance, of the deathbed injunction to LOCKHART; but he undoubtedly sheds additional and not unkindly light on the greatest Scot of them all.

Exuberance

Many characters of a richness suggesting painstaking elaboration by the author, but due actually perhaps only to his impetuous fancy, fill the pages of *Onward, Trolley!* (DENT, 8/6), by GENE FOWLER. Nearly all—notably *Captain James Job Trolley, U.S.N.* (Redd.) himself—display an aptitude for highly-coloured conversation, a tendency to do fantastic things, that all readers sated with drab reality in and out of fiction should find highly refreshing. *Captain Trolley* is the "mining editor" of a newspaper in a town in the Rocky Mountains, and he has a bitter feud with *Colonel Steele*, local financier and philanthropist. This is the basis of the plot, the bizarre complications of which, each incident having presumably sprung in a blaze of glory from the author's teeming brain, do not deserve to and indeed could not be summarised in a few bald words. Much of this extraordinary novel is very funny, all is written with an excellent picturesqueness of phrase, and it can be safely recommended to anyone who likes exuberance.

Ubi Petrus

An English judge introduced to a cardinal was sufficiently impressed by the latter's charm to exclaim, "He almost

persuades me to be a Christian." Whereupon their Irish host rejoined, "Ah, ye'd far better be a Catholic!"—a distinction which *Great Catholics* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 10/6), if it has few other sustained merits, undoubtedly assists to underline and elucidate. The book's forty-four articles are not all biographies, though they are preceded by an editorial disquisition on biography in general. Father HUGH POPE's interesting notes on "St. Augustine" are as remote from miniature completeness as Miss VERA BARCLAY's sprightly extracts from "St. Teresa." But Father MARTINDALE's "St. Paul" is a delightful example of the "little boy, pair of skates" method he has so skilfully adapted to broadcasting, and his captivating candour has worthy emulators in Father FRANCIS HOLLAND's "St. Charles Borromeo" and Mr. CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS's "Lingard." The choice ought obviously to have been better controlled. Why, one wonders, the ubiquitous "Gerard Manley Hopkins" and no "Dante"? Only two living subjects are included, and these for their principles rather than their personalities: "Father Vincent McNabb," the Distributist, and "Canon Cardijn," founder of the *Jeunesse Ouvrière Chrétienne*.

Full Tilt

It is a little late now to recommend a book for holiday reading, but *Of Course, Vitelli* (METHUEN, 7/6) has all, or nearly all, the desiderata for a quiet afternoon by the sea or on the river. Aided by an inventive mind and an almost riotous sense of the ridiculous Mr. ALAN GRIFFITHS prods at snobs, fools and faddists with unerring aim, and the result is a satirical comedy rich in laughs and only now and again venturing upon ground which not every reader regards as matter for

humour. The main hoax is built up on sound foundations, and the trial of the Leg-Puller-in-Chief at the New Bailey contains some admirable fooling.

Chess and Criminals

The title, *Mr. Pendlebury's Hat Trick* (HARRAP, 7/6), which Mr. ANTHONY WEBB has chosen, does not suggest that his discursive detective has taken to flannels, for anyone less like a cricketer than Mr. Pendlebury it is difficult to imagine. To some readers he may be as tiresome as he is amusing to others, but when once we have forgiven his prolixity he becomes one of the most attractive and paternal of fiction's sleuths. Here at times he is more of a bane than a blessing to *Detective-Inspector Wagstaffe*, but by applying his knowledge of chess to the problem that is perplexing the police he does more than qualify for another opportunity to continue his career of detection.



"JUST AS I THOUGHT—A WOMAN DRIVER!"

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Charivaria

A MAN in the waiting-room of a London solicitor's office has been stung by a wasp. Which wasn't at all fair—after all, the solicitor was there first.

★ ★ ★

"Lord Elphinstone, who has shot ibex in the innermost recesses of the Heavenly Mountains of Chinese Central Africa. . . ."—*Evening Paper*.

By flashlight?

★ ★ ★

A motorist declares that it is selfish cyclists who really take up most of the road. We fear that the navvies in our locality are likely to regard this as a challenge.

★ ★ ★

"We must take off our hat to the patient British taxpayer," says an American newspaper. No suggestion of passing it round, however.



★ ★ ★

"Novelists with ideals are like gallant knights of old spurring their way to victory," says a critic. Haply we shall see some of them in the Autumn Lists.

★ ★ ★

"More Japanese Land in China" announces a headline in a weekly

paper. There is, however, still a certain amount of Chinese soil there too.

★ ★ ★

Sights of the Town

"Lady — has been in Biarritz. She is a very practical mother, and may often be seen with her children in their pram in Hyde Park."—*Daily Mirror*.

★ ★ ★

A jockey has modelled a racehorse in butter. So there's one that *will* run.



Toy soldiers and war weapons have now been banned in South Africa. It is not yet known what billiard-table substitute will be found for the popular nursery-cannon.

★ ★ ★

"THERE WILL BE NO WAR
BY LORD BEAVERBROOK."
—*Daily Express* Placard.

It takes two to make a quarrel.

★ ★ ★

A Perthshire man has just received a letter from a brother in Australia whom he has not seen or heard of for twenty-seven years. It must have been his turn to write.

★ ★ ★

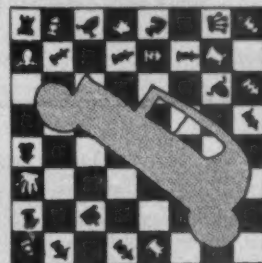
An estate at Ardnamurchan in Argyll is said to be infested with adders. There is some talk of engaging a Pied Pipe Band.

★ ★ ★

A famous chess-player has been knocked down by a Paris taxi and narrowly escaped injury. It is thought that he took rather too long to think out his move.

★ ★ ★

A recent blaze in a large warehouse was attributed to an automatic lighter. So the popular belief that this is one of the safest places for storing petrol may have to be revised.



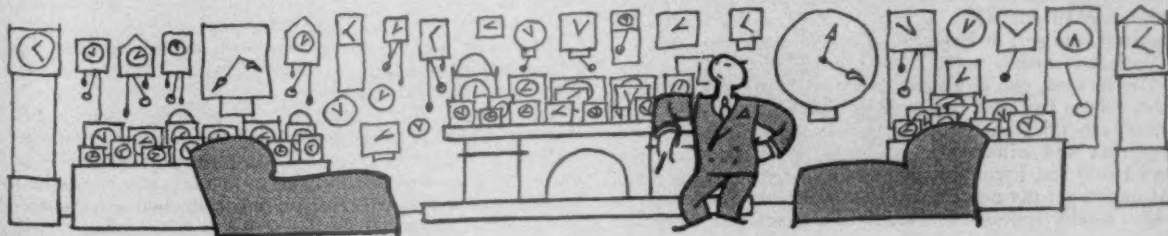
★ ★ ★

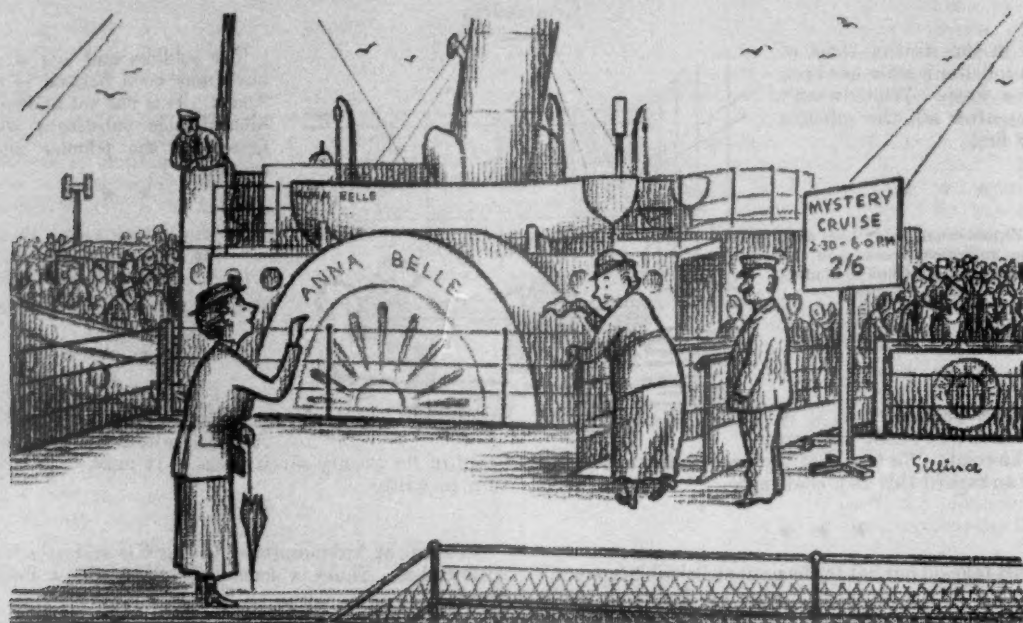
Gently Does It

"Co-education has been introduced at St. Columba's College, Hazaribagh, as an experimental measure. Arrangement has been made for the accommodation of one girl student, and if the plan succeeds it will be increased next year."—*Indian Paper*.

★ ★ ★

A doctor declares that people with hobbies rarely go crazy. He doesn't mention what happens to people who have to live with people with hobbies.





"BON VOYAGE, DEAR!"

Lucy and Lionel

DEAR GEORGE.—An occurrence occurred the other night that you might like to be kept ofay with. It happened like this. It was very late and Lucy had told me how she wanted the garden done and I said yes Lucy dear good night and what her Mothers friend had told her nephews wife about her Sidneys girl and I said yes dear good night and how wasnt it funny about that rice pudding going wrong and I said har har good night but when she said listen William I said enough no more as the bard said. I dont mean listen here she said, I mean listen hark. I can hear my poor old heart thomp thumping away I said, but ought else.

Perhaps its ghosts she said. Hardly I said, if they haunted anywhere it would be this floor where the Tudor is tacked on. Listen shush she said. Youre right I said, there is the sound of a noise below, I will reconnoitre. Dont abandon me she said. Courage I said, he them or it will only murder you over my dead body, oh revoor I hope.

I got outside the downstairs front room and strode in saying stand back men I myself will deal alone with this interloper but in so doing trod on someone. Ow someone said. Who is there? I said. Me someone said, put your gun away and Ill put mine. I havent one I said. Me neither someone said so I switched on the light and saw a trembly little fellow with a hanky over his face.

Coo he said, you didnt half give me a turn coming in like that, whats the idea of creeping about your own house? Kindly unveil I said, who are you? Lionel he said, I am desperate and will stop at nothing. Well theres nothing here I said but I would rather you didnt stop. I am going flat out to get my name writ big in the annuals of crime he said. Really indeed? I said, it is a pleasure to meet an

ambitious fellow, even one who aims at scaling the lowest depths but I must say you look more like Miss S. Temple than a crook. He turned red and away and said too true, curse those curls, I am only an amateur public enemy and have been drove to it by thwarted love and cried.

Then Lucy came in and said pardon my intruding and dressing gown but why no mortal combat? Lucy I said, this gentlemans romance has broken up so he has broken out and broken in and now he has broken down. He took out a girls photo and said thats my Evie, she has the charm of a country lane being full of dangerous curves, isnt she stunning? Dropped from a height she might be Lucy said, but he took no umbrage and said we have been walking out every Sunday afternoon and back after tea for two years and the first edition of the banns was due to be published soon but shes suddenly gone crazy re film gangsters who leave policemen lying about deceased. Thats in American films I said, which are made tough so the Censor cant cut them. But she says tough guys make history he said, she says King John didnt sign Magna Charter because he was big hearted but because the barons kind of ganged up on him, she says look at Napoleon, look at Al Capone and then look at you you poor bottle necked little suchansuch. Please please Lucy said. Yes he said, I resent same because being in a steady job Im not really poor, she says I couldnt even break into a trot let alone a bank, in short, her affection for me has tapered off something shocking but I am still madly in love. Meaning not sanely I suppose Lucy said.

Well he said, I recently saw in the paper about a girl who spent her life reforming a fellow she had driven off the rails so I thought of trying to win Evie that way. I was driven to drink for a bit but had to delete it due to the fare being too dear so now Im trying to get pinched as a dangerous criminal but when a policeman passed just now and I

leant out with the hanky over my face and coughed crafty like he only said good night Sir and trundled on, I dont know what the countrys coming to when a fellow who wants to be run in cant be, will you summon the law and have me incarcerated?

No Lucy said, professional criminals have a right to be kept by the country but amateurs cant expect their priveleges, if your girl is tough guy crazy why not walk in with a bag of swag and say alone I done it Evie? Would she fall for that? he said. If she once fell for you she is a push-over for anything else Lucy said, so you can preserve amateur status Ill give you some swag if you wait. Well he said, the horse is the friend of man but your wife seems everybodys pal.

Lucy came back and gave him a parcel which he insisted on receipting for viz received proceeds of one burglary to be returned to morrow signed Lionel Bunfold and went off happy as a fly in a bun shop. Suppose he bags the swag Lucy I said. I hope he does she said, it was a good chance of getting rid of ten of the toastracks our kind friends gave us for the wedding, good night William.

But next evening he came back greatly bandaged and said I am oh so happy. You look as though you have been partially steam rolled Lucy said, what has befallen? Well he said, I took the swag to show Evie immediately I left you and when I saw it was all toastracks inspiration sweep over me and I said Id entered ten houses and took a toastrack from each just to prove my skill. How did Evie take it? Lucy said. I had to take it he said, I understand she gave me her undivided attention for a half hour although I remember nothing after the first minute, but when I came to she said why you foolish boy I wouldnt

leave you even for Mr. E. G. Robinson, I was only pulling your leg but its come away in my hand, if you recover I dont mind wedding you if and when convenient.

But best of all he said, going there a policeman suddenly said hay just a minute and I had to run like merry hell to abscond. Whats good in that? Lucy said. Well he said, Evies father saw me in full flight as he was returning from a do and on the strength of my sprinting has engaged me to mind his bag when he takes bets from trusting punters, returned herewith toastracks with thanks.

Oh no Lucy said, you keep them, Ive been wondering what the use your imagination George to do with them ever since they became just what I wanted dear. Genuine burglars take swag to a fence he said, but a high wall on a dark night will do for these, anyway Ill send you an invite to the nuptials when theyre typed, good evening both.

Lucy I said, I feel we ought to of punished him for breaking in because even burglary under false pretences is quite a criminal crime. He has got it coming to him Lucy said, when he showed her photo last night I recognised her as the girl who does my perm every month and I will only say that if wedding her doesnt teach him a lesson no other punishment ever will. In fact she said, it wont surprise me if soon after the nuptials he goes to the police and surrenders voluntary of his own free will.

Well George we have given him another chance but you know what criminals are, they usually take it. I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—To show there is no ill feeling we shall of course send Lionel a wedding present, we thought a toastrack.



"NAB, WOT ABART A NICE BIT OF OBJAY DART?"

Wild Words in Toronto

An Imperial Dementi

Mr. Punch feels it his bounden duty to give further publicity to an honourable protest and a no less honourable apology which he finds in the columns of an esteemed contemporary. The passage quoted beneath is from the issue of *News Review* dated September 8th.

NOT THE MAYOR

MY attention has been directed to an item on page 26 of *News Review* for July 7, wherein you attribute to me a statement regarding the beaver pens in Toronto zoo.

This item is incorrect, as I did not make any such statement, although one of the City Aldermen did make some reference of this nature.

Will you be good enough to make a correction of your erroneous report.

RALPH C. DAY,
Mayor, Toronto.

Mayor's Office,
Toronto,
Canada.

News Review deeply regrets having misreported Mayor Day as saying, in connection with the beaver pens in Toronto Zoo: "They are so dirty the only thing I'd put there would be Hitler."—ED.

There is a fine manly frankness about the end of this little fracas which appeals to Mr. Punch mightily. An official so important as the Mayor of Toronto must on every occasion choose his words with the utmost care and sobriety, and in particular he is not likely to speak without a due sense of the gravity of the occasion or a very deep feeling of responsibility when he makes any allusion to the organisation and upkeep of a municipal beaver pen.



"If BETTY DOESN'T EAT IT UP, NANNY WILL HAVE TO ASK MR. GOLDSTEIN TO SUSPEND HER."

For the busy and intelligent beaver is justifiably considered all over the world to be an emblem of that great Dominion overseas, that mighty member of our Commonwealth of Nations, one of whose proudest cities Mr. DAY represents. And the pens in which the municipal beavers reside should of a surety be no less symbolical of Canada herself.

Indignation therefore and annoyance we might expect from the Mayor of Toronto if he should discover that the civic beavers are being badly housed and improperly cared for, just as we should expect a similar ebullition of anger from Signor MUSSOLINI if he observed that inadequate attention was being paid to the sanitary condition of the caged wolf that guards the Roman Capitol.

But the language incorrectly attributed to Mr. DAY in this case was not the language of compromise nor the language of peace. It was language calculated to provoke rancour, to excite animosity, to engender strife.

Was it not utterly improbable on the face of it that the Mayor of Toronto should have permitted himself even to frame in his mind, much less to utter in words the coarse phrase under notice? The Editor of *The News Review* should perhaps have considered this point before publishing the alleged remark, and he cannot be wholly acquitted of a certain want of judgment in failing to sift the evidence and ascertain the veracity of the correspondent or agency from whom he received his news.

If Mr. DAY ventured (and we do not know that he did venture) the daring statement that from the point of view of absolute cleanliness the Toronto beaver pen was still susceptible of a certain measure of general improvement; if he hazarded the hope that a Committee might be appointed to investigate lines on which an approach to that higher measure of improvement might be attained without sacrifice of economy on the one hand or undue restriction of the needs and cultural instincts of beavers on the other, it was the very utmost (Mr. Punch believes) that the Mayor of Toronto is likely to have permitted himself to say.

But a full and handsome apology has been offered; the peccant phrase has been withdrawn; and both parties to the controversy may congratulate themselves that the misunderstanding has now ceased to exist.

It only remains, we feel, for that other unnamed Alderman of whom Mr. DAY speaks in his letter to come forward and withdraw (if he cannot justify) the wild accusation he has hurled against the authorities of the Toronto Zoo with regard to the maintenance and nutriment in that institution of a widely popular and highly respected little mammal.

EVOE.

Bomber

FAR, far below this pinnacle of air
The insensible and idle river crawls
Between the insects clustered everywhere
Mottling its banks to stare
Into the droning sky above the walls.

It is some god stayed on this quiet height
With desperate venom clutched beneath his wings
That looses for his vengeance or delight
The bomb that spills from sight
To pound amongst those small black scuttling things.

The sudden stillness of those running feet
Engulfed in dust of falling tower or spire
Is not a sight for that judicial seat;
He reckons their defeat
In fountains avalanching brick and fire.



IMAGINARY CONVERSATIONS

"Negus, my heart is softened. I have decided to repopulate your country with our own magnificent Jews."

[It is said that Signor MUSSOLINI intends to find a place in Ethiopia for the Jews who are being exiled from Italy.]



"O FOR THE WINGS, FOR THE WINGS OF A DOVE—



FAR AWAY, FAR AWAY WOULD I ROVE;



IN THE WILDERNESS BUILD ME A NEST,



AND REMAIN THERE FOR EVER AT REST."

Look in Your Mirrors, Men!

THE only topic of interest at the moment, besides push-button tuning and the goings-on of Dutch Schultz, seems to be after-holiday care of the skin. Ugly patches of sunburn, shrivelled-up faces, and hands tanned to an unbecoming shade for evening wear must all be put right in readiness for the autumn festivities; and the way to do it is to use plenty of skin-food to soften the tissues, with just a dash of lemon last thing at night for bleaching purposes. I confess that the phrase "autumn festivities," which I borrow from a newspaper article, is not one which would have occurred to me personally, nor, I dare say, to many sunkissed husbands and fathers now throwing their arrears of correspondence into the office wastepaper basket. But then all this talk of pores and follicles and brittle finger-nails is not meant for husbands and fathers. Nobody seems to care about us at all. I cannot understand this, and I resent it. We have suffered, dermatologically speaking, as much as anyone; our faces have shrivelled up and our forearms have been disfigured by unsightly freckles no whit less than those of our pampered wives and daughters—more so, in fact, since once again we forgot to take with us Apollo's Indispensable Wind-Resisting Cream. Will anyone deny in these days of sex-equality that man has as much right as woman to whatever share of beauty lies within his compass?

Here, then, boys of all ages, are a few hints that may help you to overcome the ravages of sunshine, fresh air and prolonged immersion in salt water.

PEELING NOSES

One way to prevent catching sore red noses in carriage-doors, the grilles of lifts and on the points of other people's umbrellas is to keep them wrapped up in lint soaked in a solution of arsenic and Jamaica rum. This helps you to remember the affected place and keep it out of mischief. If, on taking off the bandage at night, your nose comes away in your hand, dab the place with some good astringent lotion and perhaps, if you tend to have a rather full complexion, a tiny drop of vinegar. You will be surprised at the difference this makes.

Another frequent trouble with noses that have been pressed continuously against the glass plates of aquaria or trodden on while sunbathing is the persistence of a white patch at the very end (the so-called "false leprosy"), which looks out of place against an opera cloak or black tie. There is no sovereign remedy, but sandpaper—rubbed sideways, not up and down—is often efficacious. So is port. If your nose has the appearance and feel of old blotting-paper, try mopping up ink with it.

CARE OF THE EARS

Nothing detracts more surely from masculine charm than a pair of rough and discoloured ears. I remember a friend of mine, who had been to Newquay, appearing at a dance last autumn with ears which, though well enough on the promenade or by a wheel-stall, looked thoroughly out of place on a ballroom floor. The salt had got into them and given them the appearance of pickled walnuts, an effect which was aggravated rather than improved by several strands of seaweed and a quantity of unappetising bladder-wrack. He had not even troubled to remove a baby crab which had attached itself to the lobe of his right ear. "People must take me as I am" was all he said when I remonstrated with him on his careless toilet. What an



Romeo. "AND A COUPLE OF ENVELOPES, PLEASE."

absurd attitude!—when half an hour in front of his mirror would have made all the difference. Naturally many of the best-dressed women refused to dance with him.

Very badly blackened ears should be boiled alive like lobsters, when they will instantly turn red.

THE SILHOUETTE

Just a word or two about your figures. Many of you who have spent a lazy fortnight eating Devonshire cream may find a difficulty in getting your silhouettes through revolving doors, into white waistcoats, etc. There is nothing to worry about in this condition. Regular exercise, no smoking or drinking, plenty of warm water in the middle of the morning—these are the recognised specifics. Another way is to eat nothing but beetroot, which at least means that you won't have to go through any revolving doors. Or try cutting out coupons. It doesn't matter much *what* you do as long as you don't worry.

A FIRESIDE WRINKLE

Now that the evenings are drawing in and a comfortable chair by the fireside takes the place of that final after-dinner game of rounders on the beach, many men resent the continual dropping of fine particles of sand from their eyebrows on to the pages of their favourite novel or book of poems. Sand results from the wearing down of rocks, particularly silicious rocks, and thus tends to embed itself in the roots of eyebrows, moustaches and in some cases even beards. Rinsing is a good plan; so is brushing and

combing and probing with knitting-needles. So is the use of the magnet. So is skating and drinking and eating and golf and riding on camels and putting one's shoulder to the wheel. So is mowing and hemming and humming and having another and hacking your way through virgin forests. Which reminds us that beards and moustaches can be shaved off if the trouble is very deep-seated, but eyebrows must remain. Try rinsing them.

A NEW WAY WITH OLD JOINTS

Ankles that have got badly wrenched and swollen through tripping over tussocks of grass and withy-bushes should be thrown away.
H. F. E.

The Die-Hard

SAID an author with spirit unbroken,
But little or less in the bank,
"I refuse to be plain and outspoken!
Why should I be startlingly frank?"

A Large Heart

"Mrs. J. C. Burr has as her guest few Buff Orpington Roosters between 5 and 6 lbs., some Grade Roosters. One Oxford Yearling Ram and Suffox Ewe. A few Green-gage Plums. Some wool. Four Pekin Drakes."—*Canadian Paper*.

Autumn

With grateful acknowledgments to Mr. James Douglas.

Now is the time on this galumptious day—
September really, but it might be May—
When to drink in this golden air
Is to be overcome in half a jiffy
And feel all kind of squiffy;
One simply doesn't care.
A time when e'en the gloomiest will start up,
Give a glad yell, and lift his blooming heart up.

Hush—not yet, not yet.

Happy Great Britain, Happy, happy Islet
In such a day as this
'Neath skies so well-nigh vi'let,
Can you knock spots off Italy and France?
I'll say you can.
The very leaves in alcoholic bliss
Lightly perform the latest nigger dance;
The birds in ecstasy are unconvinced,
Even as I in stanza I,
If it's the first of May or something Inst.
Dash it, I hardly recognise myself
(A plain blunt man)
In this autumnal elf
Singing in this iced sun.
(Iced: what an epithet: my hat,
You won't beat that;
That sort of thing is cheap at any price).
Singing, I say, and if I want to, twice,
Lest you should think I never can recapture
The first fine careless rapture.

But hush—one minute more.

The sun, may I repeat, is high,
My heart, again, is glad,
And if I heave a little sigh
'Tis not that I am sad,
Ascribe it to the fact that I
Am, for the moment, mad.

Hush—all right.

Hush! I have just seen a tiny cloud like a pink rosebud in the blue heaven. It blushes for its audacity, and while I watch it the young blasphemer melts away.

Leave it unrhymed, uncadenced, as it stands,
Pale gem, not to be touched by impious hands.

Gray days may come, there may be hail and thunder;
Rain, too, I shouldn't wonder;
Cold blasts may shrivel up a person's liver;
Skies will be dun
Just when we want some sun.
Possibly in the future we shall shiver,
Sneeze
And wheeze
And breathe in mud and foginess and mist.
I will admit all that if you insist.
Who cares a blow?
Let's get up earlyish and greet the day,
From golden stubble and from happy heather

Or for that matter grass
Brushing with hasty steps the dews away.
So fortified we'll watch the bad hours pass,
And damn the weather.
O Spirit of Delight whom SHELLEY—*Hush!*
The pink blasphemer—"Why blasphemer?"—Tush.
DUM-DUM.

The Dowsing World

LET us, as we totter side by side along the populous and literature-infested streets of the metropol—the metropolis, discuss dowsing and one thing and another. What

YOU HAVE JUST BEEN FILMED. SEND THIS CARD WITH A POSTAL ORDER FOR ONE SHILLING AND YOU WILL RECEIVE BY RETURN A FINE PICTURE OF YOURSELF.

Name

Address OX577

is more pleasant than an amiable discussion, constantly interrupted, about one of the least absorbing scientific problems of the day?

The question was rhetorical, and still is.

Dowsands and dowsands—I beg your pardon. A tremendous number of people are dowsers without being aware of the fact. This tremendous number must grow hourly smaller, for the announcement is by no means new;

OUR CAMERAMAN HAS JUST PHOTOGRAPHED YOU. ONE SHILLING AND SIXPENCE sent with this card will bring you two fine natural action pictures of yourself.

Name

ABD37145

Address

but every time it is made, at intervals of about two or three years, I suppose it must be fresh to some people. Thus we are faced with the undoubted truth that every two or three years an outbreak of amateur dowsing sweeps the country like a small plague. This seems to me an interesting point, and one the different aspects of which have been very little considered. Let us, wandering amid the manifold distractions of the crowded thoroughfare, see

PICTURES OF YOU have just been taken by the original FILMOPIX CAMERAMAN, than whom, etc. Send TWO SHILLINGS with this card and your name and address and you will receive a fine strip of THREE NATURAL MOTION PICTURES of yourself, or the person in front of you if we make a mistake. ZXX0013862

what moments of uneasy and useless consideration we can give them.

Strange Incident in a Gambling-Hell

It was about six o'clock when he came in. The casino was nearly full. As he made his way amongst the crowd to the third roulette-table, peering gently ahead through thick pebble-glasses mended at the sides with pipe-cleaners, people turned to stare at him a second time, for that gilded room had never seen his like before. He wore bright-blue socks and Harris trousers, short and narrow at the ends, and his small figure was enveloped in a Norfolk jacket which was a maze of pleats, belts and pockets and far too large. His shirt was open and his hair stood away from his head like a wild briar; but even more than these what pinned attention was the smile of purposeful benevolence which lit up his face, as if he were on his way to feed some favourite birds.

He took the last seat at the table, in the middle of a group of regulars, and, pulling from his pocket a pile of five-franc chips, began building these into a little bungalow.

"It's a pity they're so slippery," he remarked to his left-hand neighbour. She was a Colonel's widow, a lady who sat hour after hour like a ramrod without varying her expression of being about to sack her cook. She made no reply.

"Faites vos jeux!" urged the croupier. The stranger reluctantly took the roof off his bungalow and bowled it out across the table, where it toppled over on to the seventeen. He left it there and started to draw a horse on the account-pad in front of him.

"Do you find horses' ears very hard



"YES, I'M A GREAT GARDENER."

to get?" he asked his neighbour on the right. This was a heavy dark man who twinkled with diamonds wherever these could reasonably be attached to his person. He was in the middle of one of the immense multiplication sums which most of the regulars went in for but which seemed to mean very little to them when they were finished, and he grunted angrily.

"Le dix-sept!" cried the croupier. The stranger, who was concentrating on the arch of his horse's tail, took no notice. The croupier touched his arm and pointed to a pile of coloured chips which he was steering with his rake out to the seventeen. "Your winnings, M'sieu. You do not wish them left on the number?"

"Why not?" asked the stranger. "They look very nice out there. By all means leave them."

The croupier shrugged his shoulders

and a titter went round the end of the table. But when two minutes later the ball gave its last crazy hop and fell once more into the seventeen, there was a dead silence.

"M'sieu has good fortune," said the croupier politely.

"Dear me, have I really won again?" murmured the stranger, blinking at the vulgar mass of chips which was being pushed towards him. "Would you be so kind as to put them somewhere out there for me with that dredger thing of yours? Try the seventeen again if you like."

"The limit *en plein* is a hundred-and-eighty francs, M'sieu. You have over six thousand there."

"You don't say so! Well, where can we put them?"

"Pair or Impair, M'sieu, *Manque* or *Passe, Rouge* or *Noir*. And also—"

The stranger turned to a timid little gentleman from Siam who was losing a large fortune steadily to the Casino as though in doing so he was deeply privileged. "Which would you say was the best?" he asked. "The game is new to me."

"Sir, they are all very terrible, very, very difficult."

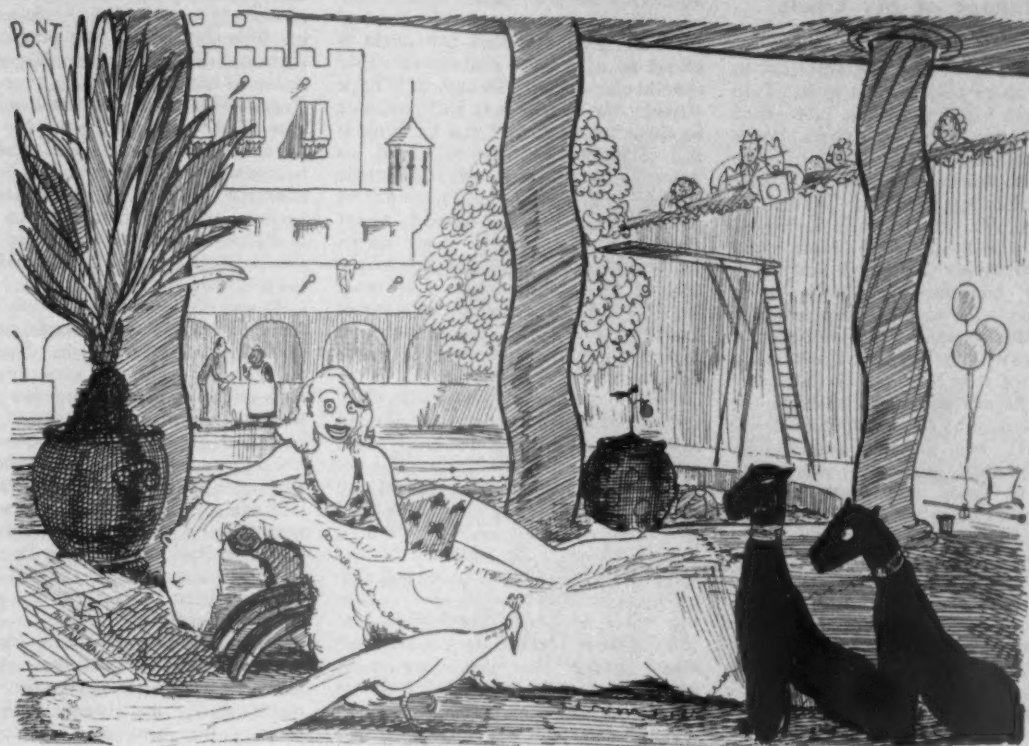
"And which would you advise?"

The stranger turned courteously to a tall Englishman, chairman of five companies, whose habit it was to justify each bet to himself by means of a short personal board-meeting conducted beneath his breath.

"Dammit, Sir, you must make up your mind for yourself!" the stranger was told. He sighed.

"Very well. Would you be good enough to propel all this into that big partition on the right? The one that looks like the exercise-ground? It's so like the map of a prison!"





AT HOME

THE FILM STAR

"*Manque*," said the croupier. "Do you wish your original stake moved from the seventeen, *M'sieu*?"

"It hardly seems to matter," the stranger murmured. "Push it along a little if you like."

"You must tell me the number, *M'sieu*."

"How many children have you got?" he asked innocently.

"Three, *M'sieu*."

"The three, then. This seems quite a pleasant game," he said, turning sociably to a lady a few seats off, "but I can see it getting a trifle monotonous." She was an opera-singer, and made up her face once an hour on the cumulative principle, so that by the end of the day she had an air of being a bad portrait done with a palette-knife. At his words she gave a low moan.

Before the ball was spun it was noticeable that both the three and the *Manque* were heavily plastered with chips and that the rest of the table was bare.

"*Le trois!*" cried the croupier, the slightest queer in his voice.

"Not again!" said the stranger, almost irritably. "That's what I meant," he explained to the opera-singer, "there isn't enough variety. Not like snakes and ladders, for instance. I suppose you haven't a paper-bag I could put some of these in?" he asked the croupier. "Never mind. We'll use them somewhere."

Such a crowd had gathered from the other tables that there was scarcely room for the bets which came piling thickly round the stranger's.

His luck held.

Only once he lost, and then he remarked brightly—and by now anything he said was listened to with reverence, even by the Colonel's widow—"That does make a nice change, doesn't it?" And once he moved his main stake at the last moment to another square, too late for the others to change, but the chairman of companies remonstrated with him respectfully and he promised never to do it again. He had so many chips in front of him that they overflowed on to the floor. The excitement was more tense than the

tables had ever known. Even the croupiers were moved, and the directors of the Casino were fluttering in an anxious, hand-washing little group behind them.

Suddenly the stranger looked at his watch and jumped up.

"Dear me, I must be getting along," he cried.

A gasp of horror burst from the whole table.

"You *can't* go in the middle of a run like this," groaned the heavy dark man. "It isn't possible. It's not decent."

"Another forty kilometres to do before bed, I fear," the stranger explained. "But all this has been most delightful."

"*Forty kilometres?*" cried a dozen husky voices. "You can knock that off in half-an-hour!"

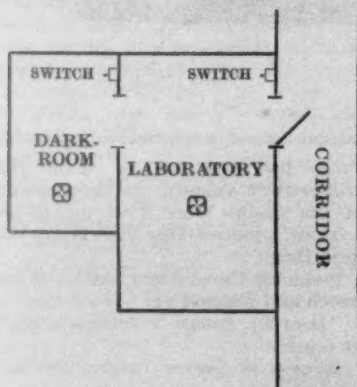
The stranger was busy doing something queer to his trouser-ends.

"Not on a push-bicycle, certainly not," he said. "And you all know what oil-lamps are!" he added.

ERIC.

Sabotage of My Uncle

It has always been my ambition to write a story with a plan in it. I do not mean a story with a plot—that would be too much to expect, but a story illustrated by one or more diagrams showing (for example) Bathroom, Landing, Colonel Maverick's Bedroom, Mr. van Spruit's Bedroom, Mrs. Postlethwaite's Bedroom, and Place Where Mr. Walpole's Body Was Found. And now that I have been presented with a golden opportunity for the realisation of this ambition, I have an awful feeling that I may make a mess of it. Not that I have any doubts of my ability to perform the small amount of draughtsmanship involved; but having acquired a perfectly good (and true) story into which at least one diagram may legitimately be introduced, I find myself rather at a loss how to begin. Perhaps the best thing is to be perfectly frank and above-board, not withholding anything from the reader, not seeking to work up artificially an atmosphere of horror and suspense, but letting the story stand on its own merits. Suppose we start right off with the Plan:—



⊠ = electric light fixture.

The above diagram is, I hope, almost self-explanatory. The scene is laid in a laboratory—a very good place in which to lay almost any sort of scene nowadays, apart from the fact that that is where it took place. A small photographic dark-room opens off the laboratory. This dark-room, you will notice, has its own separate electric-light fixture; and the switch for the light in the laboratory (as you have already perceived) is beside the door leading into the corridor.

Down the corridor there comes the figure of a man—my uncle. He enters

the laboratory, switches on the light and closes the door behind him. I may as well dispel at once any hopes my readers may have that my uncle is about to commit a robbery or other spectacular crime. Though it is dark outside, the hour is only half-past four in the afternoon, and the building is full of employees, one of whom (as Artemus Ward might say) my uncle is which. The other employees are all going more or less industriously about their allotted tasks; so is my uncle. In the course of his daily duties he has arrived at a point at which he must take an X-ray photograph of a metal what-not which has sheared clean off at the thingummy, and this is where he does it.

It is no part of my purpose to elaborate at this point on the romance of modern science. I could easily hold you spellbound for hours with a description of the noise the X-ray machine made, and how my uncle bent over it like a hawk poised for its swoop; but that would be contrary to the spirit of this narrative. So we will skip the hawk stuff and merely observe that my uncle took the photograph, retired with it into the dark-room, and, after closing the dark-room door, immersed the plate—*splosh!*—in its little tank of developer.

An X-ray photograph is of course quite a superior article compared with the common or seaside snapshot; and it is in keeping with its dignified status that it takes a long time—about two hours—to develop. My uncle therefore, having no intention of sustaining his imitation of a hawk for this length of time, prepared to depart. But at this juncture an unforeseen difficulty arose.

The reader will do well at this stage to consult the Plan. There is the dark-room, illuminated only by the dim ruby glow of its safe-light. In the dark-room are

- (a) The plate, developing;
- (b) My uncle.

So far so good. But see! my uncle wants to get out. The plate, on the other hand, wants to stay where it is—in the dark.

I fancy the intelligent reader will now begin to see what I am driving at. My uncle is a man of many accomplishments, but there is only one way in which he can leave a room with one door and no windows—viz., by the door. The door (*see Plan*) opens into the laboratory. And in the laboratory is an electric light, like Dives, burning, burning.

My uncle stood a while in thought. He did not want to risk opening the dark-room door, leaping out like a

startled fawn and slamming it behind him in the hope that the light from the laboratory would not have time to leak in. The photograph was precious and it would be irksome to his restless spirit to have to start all over again. Nor was he much impressed with the idea of shouting for help. He would have to shout both loud and long before any help arrived, and when it did arrive it might take the form of a fire-brigade. Besides, it might give rise to undesirable rumours, and could hardly fail to lower his dignity in the eyes of his fellow-workers.

It was obviously a situation calling for deeds rather than words, and my uncle hesitated no longer. Switching off the safe-light, he unscrewed the bulb and laid it, after a few unsuccessful attempts, on the bench. Next he felt in his pocket and succeeded in finding, by sense of touch, a sixpence. Picking up the electric-light bulb, he laid the sixpence carefully across the top of it and replaced it, sixpence and all, in its socket. Then, with a short incantation suitable for the experiment he was about to perform, he pressed down the switch.

Every fuse in the building blew out. My uncle waited until the sound of hurrying feet and heavy bodies coming unexpectedly into contact with pieces of office furniture overhead told him that the experiment was a success. Then he recovered his sixpence and walked out, closing the door behind him.

The mechanical stirrer in the tank of developer gurgled appreciatively, and the plate shook slightly where it lay, as if with silent laughter.

Aftermath

"FOURTEEN pounds, three shillings and ninepence, *not* counting the gate-money which hasn't yet come in, and taking away a pound's-worth of silver that Uncle Egbert put in, and adding whatever they made on the raffles," said Laura.

I had to remind her that seven-and-sixpence was still owing to the ice-cream-and-lemonade stall, and that Miss Dodge had openly stated her inability to explain a shortage of elevenpence that was being claimed by the bran-tub.

"And what," said Aunt Emma, "about the teas?"

Laura thought we must have lost on the teas, but my own view was that we'd come out about level, even allowing for Mrs. Robjohn's bringing in seven of her little ones at half-price

and the little ones keeping at it steadily for an hour and ten minutes. So then Aunt Emma said there was nothing for it but to bring in whatever had been left unsold from the Bargain Stall, and Laura and I—to whom this rather delicate task falls yearly—went out to get it.

"Priscilla's green went almost at once," I said, not without wistfulness, as I picked up my own blue that one really would have thought quite as good a purchase any day of the week.

"I thought I'd got rid of Mother's tweed coat *twice*," Laura said. "If it was tried on once it was tried on twenty times; but it never seemed to be quite the right size for anybody, not even at half-a-crown. Her black evening shoes were a great success, though. They went at once."

"So did the blue net and most of the jumpers."

"Did you get rid of your old foulard?" Laura asked rather crudely.

I replied that my foulard tea-gown had found a purchaser without difficulty at three-and-sixpence, reduced from five shillings.

In fact, except for Priscilla's third cousin's opera-cloak, which obviously dated from the early 'nineties, Aunt Emma's coat-and-skirt that she still hoped didn't show where the moth had been in, and one or two contributions from the wardrobes of Laura and myself, we had sold almost everything except—as usual—the hats.

The hats were still with us.

Some of them could almost have walked up to the stall of their own accord, they must have known the way to it so well year after year.

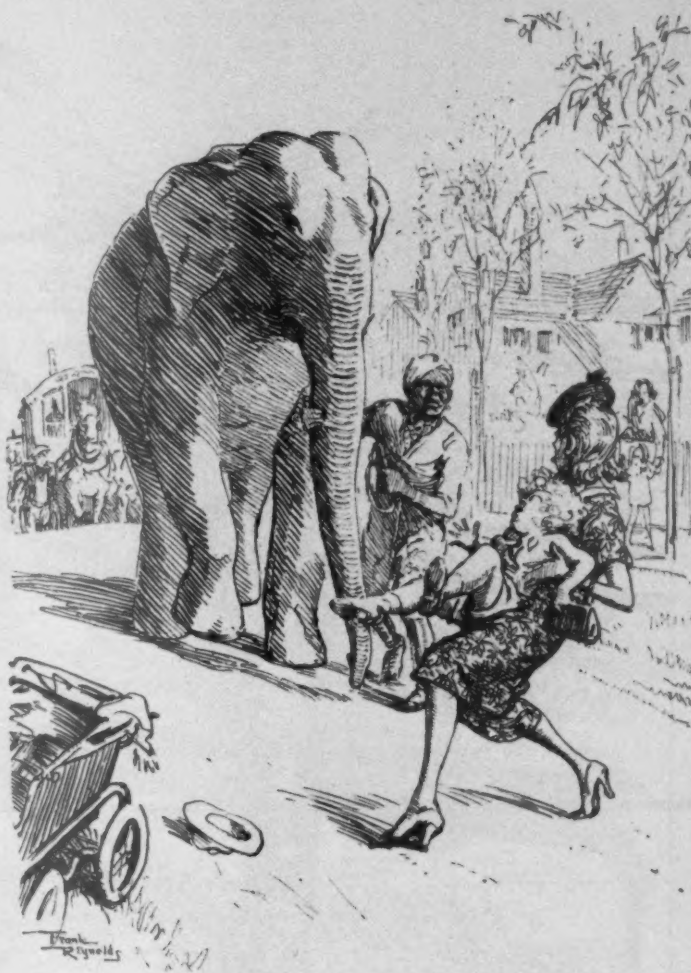
"I wonder nobody bought Uncle Egbert's straw boater for theatricals or a museum or something," Laura said thoughtfully.

Without going as far as that, one felt that somebody might have liked Aunt Emma's nice purple velours with the quill, or the scarlet Hawaiian straw with the fringe, even if Grand-mama's large black mushroom hat with the green lining had been almost wholly lacking in appeal, as had her last summer's brown straw with that dear little bit of brown lace hanging down behind and the yellow pansies in front.

"It's always the same with the hats," said Laura sadly as she swept up old Lady Flagge's feather boa, wreath of artificial cherries, green cotton gloves and five black felt hats.

"But really I did think someone would buy my last year's red straw."

"So did I. It's still a very good colour. And I thought my mauve would have sold."



"GARN! ANYBODY COULD LOOK AFTER AN ELEPHANT."

"It always suited you," Laura returned sadly.

We carried the things indoors.

"Up to the attic, dears," said Aunt Emma firmly. "There's a Jumble Sale just before Christmas, so we want to have the things handy."

One has often felt that Aunt Emma is as good an example as any of the spirit that has made our Island race what it is to-day.

We came down to the good news that four-and-sixpence had just come in from the Produce Stall, and that Miss Plum had found one of the new three-penny bits in her bag and was sure it couldn't be hers because she'd have noticed the shape if it had been, so she was putting it into the tea-money.

"Really, it's all quite good," said Aunt Emma, and Uncle Egbert agreed with her, and added that he was thankful to feel it was over and done with.

"Except the hats," said Laura.

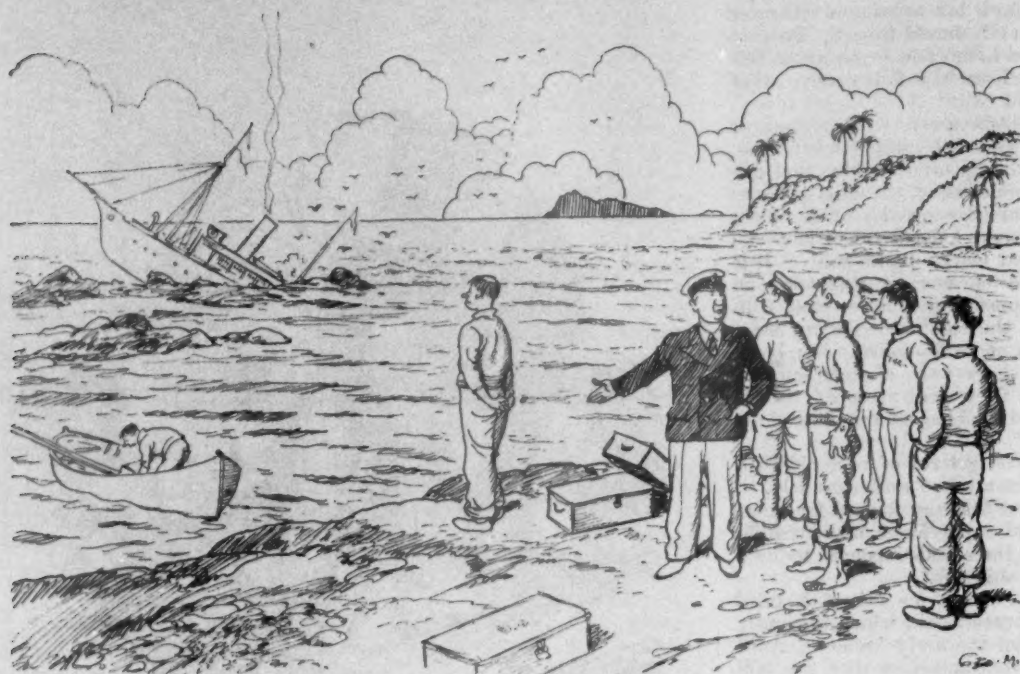
But as a matter of fact it wasn't except the hats.

Laura's red one suits me very nicely, and she looks quite well in my mauve, and it leaves more room in Aunt Emma's attic. E. M. D.

"The river is infested with crocodiles. Needless to say, the natives of the district much appreciate this new amenity."

East African Paper.

Keeps 'em fit, you know—what!



"SO THAT'S THAT, AND I'M NOT SORRY! IT'S GOING TO SAVE ME A LOT OF MONEY."

"Don't Say 'Hullo'"

["Don't say 'Hullo.' Announce your identity."—London Telephone Directory.]

Don't say "Hullo." Announce your identity.
Indicate your species. Classify your entity.
Enumerate the marks by which the scientific mind
Can certainly distinguish you from others of your kind;
State your major measurements, and where you were
designed—
But don't say "Hullo."

Don't say "Hullo." This absurd ejaculation
Is an insufficient pointer to your name and sex and
station;
Admittedly it does suggest that *somebody* is there
Who wishes, or is willing, to communicate—but where?
And how are they to tell if you're a Brahmin or a
bear?
So don't say "Hullo."

Don't say "Hullo." Apart from lack of clarity
The POSTMASTER-GENERAL must deprecate vulgarity.

Remember that the instrument to which we have referred
Is provided by HIS MAJESTY, who doesn't like the word;
And imagine what a shock if all the Civil Servants heard!
Oh, don't say "Hullo."

Don't say "Hullo." Unseasonable levity,
Gross lack of reverence, unfashionable brevity!
The more words the merrier: so carefully proclaim
"It's the Anglo-Swedish Company to Set the Thames Aflame.
I'm one of the stenographers, and Fanny is my name"—
But don't say "Hullo."

Don't say "Hullo." Announce your identity.
Indicate your species. Classify your entity.
Tabulate your ancestors and name your lucky star;
What is your religion and the number of your car?
Or, to put it rather crudely, TELL THE FELLOW WHO YOU
ARE—
But don't say "Hullo." A. P. H.



THE LIMIT

Herren Hitler and Henlein (to Dr. Benes). "There! Now we can all chat together comfortably."

Occupational Vagaries

If and when I am invited to contribute my humble quota to the august pages of *Who's Who*, I think I shall include among the tally of my recreations that of "Witnessing signatures on share-transfers and things." There is a whole lot of amusement and instruction to be got out of this seemingly dull occupation; it gives you an insight into how the other fellow lives.

The bits to look at are the dotted lines preceded by the word "Occupation." Take, for example, the case of Miss Marguerite Henrietta Blatchford, of Hoopington Gardens, South Kensington. Miss Blatchford—now, thanks to my co-operation, the fortunate possessor of two-hundred-and-fifty Unga-Wunga Deeps, lately the property of my brother—describes herself on the transfer as a "femme sole." From these two words alone it is possible to build up a very fair mental portrait of Miss Blatchford.

In the first place she is obviously a lady of culture. Every person of culture, it has been said, has two countries—their own and France; and here we have Miss Blatchford employing the French language when she wishes to give a concise pen-picture of herself. It may be that she is not fluent in the tongue, but at any rate she knows enough to deal with the ordinary needs of the day, such as ordering a meal, booking rooms at an hotel, and filling in her occupation on share-transfers.

But, cultured as she is, we see also that Miss Blatchford is of an unpractical turn of mind. The deduction in this case is rather less elementary (my dear Watson) than in the first. The reasoning is as follows: Miss B. describes herself as a "femme sole" because she is chary of calling herself a spinster. Quite evidently there can only be one reason for a single woman to refrain from calling herself a spinster, and that is because she is unable to spin. And since spinning is by definition the staple occupation of single women, I deduce that Miss B. is an unpractical person.

I may add that I was firmly under the impression that what she had described herself as was a "fried sole" until my brother pointed out my error and punctured another of those fond illusions that make life so pleasant for us imaginative folk.

Leaving Miss Blatchford and looking farther down the page, we find the name of my brother Claude, qualified by the barefaced appellation "gentleman." Blushing uneasily, Claude has



"NO, BERTHA, HE DIDN'T SAY IT WAS A PERSIAN RUG. PERISHING WAS THE WORD, I THINK."

attempted to explain this away; his stock-and-share-monger, he says, rang him up on the telephone and asked what to put his occupation down as. Being told with minute accuracy "Vacuum-cleaner salesman and street-corner bookmaker," this impatient individual jumped at a hasty conclusion and said "Oh—gentleman," and left it at that.

Still farther down the page and a little to one side it is my own turn. I am only a witness in the transaction, but the importance of us witnesses is by no means underestimated in financial circles, where they are well aware that hardly a stock or a share could be transferred without us. So we are taken fully into their confidence, and all my details go in alongside those of the principals.

For a long time I clung to the unenterprising term "journalist" in classifying my activities for this purpose, until it occurred to me that there was no real need to hide my light under a bushel and I decided in future to substitute "humorist." The first time I put this into practice was on the will

of a middle-aged friend of mine called Nosworthy, and I am sorry to say that the will was returned to me by his solicitors (whom I happened to know) with the comment, "Don't be funny."

Now this was at the same time encouraging and discouraging. It was discouraging to realise that the world would not accept my own valuation of myself; if I was going to be discredited in that way I might just as well have given myself the pleasure of writing "the well-known humorist," or even describing myself as a Governor-General or an Archduke. On the other hand it was distinctly encouraging to know that I had in fact been funny. I returned the will to Nosworthy's solicitor just as it stood, but with a note pinned to it in which I pointed out that the very accusation they made against me of being—aply or not—funny justified me in using the word I had; and I added an alternative clause to the effect that, since what they had asked for was my *occupation*, and not in so many words my method of earning what I laughingly call my living, I would, if I had really intended to pull



"YOU'LL BE WELL LOOKED AFTER NOW, OLD MAN; HERE COMES THE DISTRICT NURSE."

their venerable legs, have been not only able but even entitled to write "knitting" or "blind man's bluff" or "playing the bassoon," or whatever it was I was engaged in when the form was brought to me for signature.

By the time this amusing little controversy was settled to the satisfaction of all parties, poor Neworthy had been run over by a tram, and his money, under the terms of a previous will, was distributed equally between myself and the National Society for Providing Stools and Cuff-links for Needy Orphans. Perhaps that was why his family and friends did not laugh at the little contretemps as heartily as I would have expected them to.

Incidentally there is another good joke to be extracted from share-transfers and places where they sign. This is the provision of a dotted line, some inch-and-three-quarters in length, upon which one is supposed to inscribe some such legend as 127A, St. Christopher's Buildings, Little Tiddlers Court, Gracechurch Street, E.C.

Unfortunately the joke here is on the signer.

"If I may take first the trade agreement, I would say that that is an arrangement which can stand on its own bottom."

"Times" Parliamentary report.

Like Humpty-Dumpty!

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers
VII.

Hotfoot. A practical joke much favoured by the more pestilential type of prankster. A match is slyly stuck into the boot of the victim at the point where sole and upper meet, and is then lighted with a second match. Hot leather against one's foot produces a sudden and very sharp stinging sensation, causing the slumbering victim to leap up with a howl and hop around madly until he gets his shoe off, after which he sits rubbing his foot and glaring at the merry onlookers. If he is of a choleric disposition he may very likely turn purple and splutter so violently as to seem in imminent danger of blowing out his

Front china. Front teeth. It is quite fascinating to watch such a person turn purple. He does such a thorough job of it, especially if he happens to be a

Marbletop. Baldpate. Giving a person the hotfoot is a low trick in most instances, but there are of course some people who deserve to have such tricks played on them—for example, the chronic

Moocher. Parasite; a person who is always borrowing money with no intention of paying it back, who will

wear your clothes and eat your food if you'll let him. *Syn.*: chiseler, brother-in-law. The wise man is the one who declares, "I'm not going to have that bum mooching off me!" and forthwith kicks him out of the house. And if he lands nearer than the second step from the bottom you're not really trying. The person who fails to follow this course of action in dealing with a moocher is simply an

Umpchay. A fool; a simpleton; one who allows himself to be imposed upon unduly or swindled. *Syn.*: chump, sap, sucker, dumb chuck. Umpchay is the pig-Latin version of the term "chump." An umpchay is the type of person who decides, when he has his wallet full of money, to save time getting home by taking a short cut through a dark alley. As a result, often as not his roll changes hands, due to the presence in the shadows of the alley of a couple of tough

Greaseballs. Swarthy, oily-skinned men. Setting upon the umpchay they clomp him on the conk (hit him on the head), and his hard-earned becomes their ill-gotten. When he comes to and finds he has been separated from his hard-earned, the umpchay runs to the nearest copper and sets up a howl. He loudly demands that the two greaseballs be apprehended and tossed in the

College. The penitentiary. If they are not caught they may drop in at a

local arena to see a wrestling-match, and perhaps bet a portion of their ill-gotten on some big

Palooka. Wrestler. The word is now also applied generally to any large gent who is well supplied with brawn, especially if he happens to be a trifle under par where brains are concerned. It is usually preceded by the qualifying adjective "big," as in "Listen, ya big palooka, how 'd ya like a bust in the beezzer?" If the person speaking does eventually give the big palooka the opportunity to find out how he likes a bust in the beezzer (nose), he may

Take a dive. Pretend to be knocked out. Sometimes gamblers are able to bribe a boxer to throw a fight (lose it intentionally). He is instructed, let us say, to lose by a knockout in the fifth round. During that round, then, his opponent taps him somewhere in the region of the chin, and whether this tap is a hard blow or a pat which wouldn't disconcert a butterfly its recipient immediately staggers back for all the world as though he had just taken a sixteen-inch shell through the chest and collapses with a thud upon the canvas. This is known as taking a dive in the fifth, and many a pug has in this fashion picked up a little extra

Folding money. Banknotes. All in all, the fight game is almost as bad as the

Grunt-and-grapple game. Wrestling. Prize-fighters all have managers of course, and most managers have more than one fighter in their

Stable. Group of fighters under one manager. Example of use: if a manager and a friend are sitting in a gym watching one of the manager's fighters work out, and the friend comments favourably on the way the gladiator is worrying the punching-bag, the manager may say, "Yes, One-Punch McCarthy there is the best boy I got in my stable." "Even better than Butcher McKee!" asks the friend, surprised. "Yes, even better than Butch," avers the mgr. Much impressed, the friend hurries away to get a piece of change down (place a bet) on One-Punch, who is to fight Torpedo Torrio the following evening. At that time, however, One-Punch unfortunately obstructs the path of one of Torpedo's sleeper punches and leaves the ring feet first and not under his own power. Whereupon the manager's friend swears off betting on a sure thing for the nth and, he fondly believes, last time, and leaves the ringside muttering out of the side of his mouth,

"*Omnibus hoc vitium est.*" "All have this vice." (Don't ask me how that got in here; I never saw it before in my life.)



"THESE IS REAL GOOD, MYNHEER. LISTEN HOW THEY BURN!"

Going West

To the Editor of "Punch"

DEAR SIR,—Being about to travel to America I have been given a form to fill in which demanded replies to no fewer than thirty-seven questions. These included a number of embarrassing inquiries into one's private life and opinions, such as Have you ever been in Prison or in a Lunatic Asylum? Are you a Polygamist? Are you an Anarchist? Do you advocate the overthrow by force or violence of the Government? Have you ever been arrested or deported?

Having read through all these ques-

tions I set about filling in the answers, and on reaching the question of Nationality I was referred to the back of the form, on which I found three columns of recognised Nationalities. In the centre column were the following: Greek, Hebrew, Herzegovinian, Irish, Italian (North), Italian (South), Japanese, Korean, Lithuanian, Magyar, Mexican, Montenegrin, Moravian, Pacific Islander. On reaching this last I felt that I had found an answer to many of these personal inquiries, so I just wrote across the pages in large letters PACIFIC ISLANDER. Do you think this will satisfy the authorities?

Yours faithfully,

D. R.

At the Play

"RUNNING RIOT" (GAIETY)

THERE comes a great moment at the end of the first half of *Running Riot* when *Cornelius Crumpet* (Mr. LESLIE HENSON), finding himself called to run risks, to rescue the heroine who has been kidnapped, comes down into the audience to say "Good-bye" to all and sundry with fervent shakes of the hand before leaving for peril.

As I found myself gripping the Hensonian hand the fancy came to me what a supreme disaster it would be if LESLIE HENSON really had to be jeopardised. I thought whatever other lives we could do without, this one at any rate must be preserved. For here is sustained universal benefaction on the great scale. The new show at the Gaiety yields him—is compelled to yield him—the widest range, from his first appearance as a Professor of Flea Training to his later adventures when, disguised with a red fringe of beard as a seafaring man from the works of W. W. JACOBS, he braves the opium den of *Slim Sam*. The Chinese, who are in league with many pretty villains, as the Chinese on the stage so often are, think they will frighten the seafaring man to death, but their best efforts in the blood-curdling business cannot distract Mr. HENSON and Mr. EMNEY from a long, if at times halting, conversation about porridge.

Here the humour of the whole Act is greatly enhanced by what may be called its architectural finish, and an increasing tension is built up, but built up gradually; and the laughter is not a succession of reports of a level loudness, but marches to a crescendo. There are intermediate adventures in the film business which have been planned and brought to perfection on the same lines, and there is all

through a most comfortable sense that these are not comedians making the most of their raw material, but that the raw material is quite inexhaustible because there is no human activity or type which they cannot at once bend

to their excellent purposes. For Mr. HENSON is not only funny in himself but the cause of fun in other men.

There are, through the evening, a number of minor character-studies—play with the accents of a yokel or a German-Jewish film producer—which give us this feeling that there is no human being whose ways could not with a few dexterous twists be utilised for these scenes.

Mr. EMNEY, whose genius is for passivity and phlegm, even when stolen clocks are going off at the most inconvenient moments inside his clothes, begins the evening as a really remarkable prize baby, the incarnation of GILBERT's *Bab* ballad about the child of elderly parents. He ends in *Slim Sam*'s den, a seafaring man with spade beard, just as calm and unsurprised.

Mr. RICHARD HEARNE, in the rôle of *Montgomery Burkinshaw*, is an admirable companion for Mr. EMNEY because his speciality is a kind of nervous apprehensiveness and a resolved concentration upon the matter in hand. He is rather like an academic man feeling a little out of his depth while travelling, and he encounters inconveniences and physical knocks, including an admirably staged fall from a ladder through a window without, happily, being any the worse. He has great success when he dances the lancers completely by himself but with such an intensity of concentration that he manages to convey not merely a sense of the other dancers but an idea of how they differ from each other in clumsiness and weight and of the varying stress he is undergoing in playing his correct part on the dance-floor.

This rich comic business works on dialogue written at a high level and full of the wit that carries intellectual criticism, as when an authoress, the *Hon. Mrs. Dott* (Miss ROSALIND ATKINSON) declares that "to copy from one book is plagiarism, to copy from



INTERRUPTION TO THE WALTZ

Betty Browne. Miss LOUISE BROWNE
Richard Vane Mr. ROY ROYSTON



SANG-FROID

Cornelius Crumpet Mr. LESLIE HENSON
Charlie Coe Mr. FRED EMNEY

three books is research." But the stream of humour flows between banks which are not well tended or clear to the eye: to vary the metaphor, *Running Riot* is a show like a photograph of a kind which keeps a clear focus in the centre against a very blurred background.

There is a sort of story of the kidnapping of *Betty Browne* (Miss LOUISE BROWNE) in the interests of *José Regalo* (Mr. RICHARD CALDICOT), but it is a story in which nobody takes very much interest. It serves as a kind of thin string connecting the separate pearls of humour; and that is not the way plots about kidnappers should be treated. They become irrelevant if they are not allowed to become exciting, and these shows are all the better when they are about something and not barely distinguishable from revues.

When the minor characters are well cast and well acted we would be so very ready to see them in coherent relationships with one another. This is particularly true of Miss ROSALIND ATKINSON, who is wasted as a woman who at the beginning seems full of comic promise, a Society lady who has made a huge success as a novelist, but who becomes increasingly a minor figure whose only purpose in the play is to welcome the recovered heroine at the end.

Miss LOUISE BROWNE is at her best as a waitress who is really an actress and thinks of herself as an actress and undergoes with difficulty the constraint of a less spectacular if necessary calling.

This is not a piece in which the music is very memorable, although there is one extremely effective musical interlude in which Mr. HENSON finds himself caught up in a chorus of men singing an interminable song about musical instruments; but it is Mr. HENSON's happy gift to make interminableness itself a source of loud and happy laughter and cries for more. D. W.

"THE FLASHING STREAM" (LYRIC)

The two main characteristics of Mr. CHARLES MORGAN's novels are a subtle exploration of the inner recesses of the mind in its relation to the spirit, and a beautiful prose style; and when his first play was announced it was not easy

to imagine how the former was to be adapted to the dynamics, the latter to the economics of the theatre. But



AN EXPLOSION THAT DID COME OFF

Commander Edward Ferrers, R.N.
Mr. GODFREY TEARLE
Karen Selby . Miss MARGARET RAWLINGS

there is no doubt that he has switched over with success. He has written a play which moves easily and purposefully from point to point, in dialogue

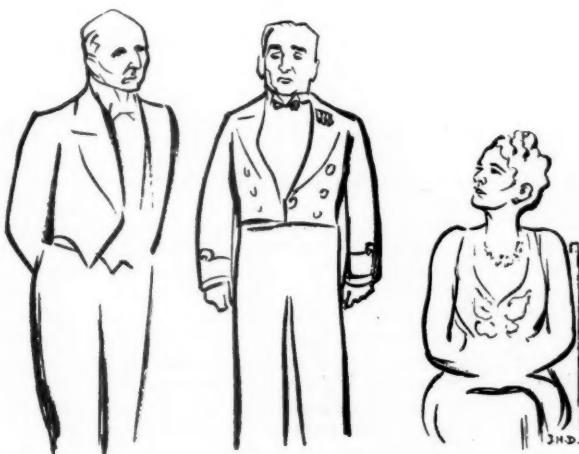
well-balanced for the stage and soundly backed with wit; and though one may disagree with some of his conclusions and even feel, as I do, that the piece has been rather overpraised, one must be grateful for an evening in which so many good hares are intelligently hunted.

The scene is an island in the Atlantic where a British Naval Experimental Station has been set up to make and try out a kind of aerial torpedo known as the Scorpion, which is to be sucked towards enemy bombers by the effect of their vibrations on a delicate receiving-set. Its inventor is Commander Ferrers (Mr. GODFREY TEARLE), a mathematical genius to whom a reluctant Admiralty has allotted a picked team of assistants.

The necessary calculations are in the furthest clouds, where symbols and philosophy melt into one; and when Selby, the famous mathematician who is helping Ferrers, is killed, the only person with the peculiar qualifications to replace him is his sister, Karen (Miss MARGARET RAWLINGS), who is visiting the island under the wing of the First Lord (Mr. FELIX AYLME). Ferrers, falling in love with her at sight and knowing the catches in a monastic life, resists her appointment but is over-ruled. She is also in love with him from the beginning, but both are passionately agreed that the pursuit of ultimate truth through the mystery of mathematics is really all that counts, and each determines that there shall be no declaration until the job in hand is finished.

The big bad wolf who throws the spanner into the works is the Admiral's wife, Lady Helston (Miss MARGA VANNE), secretly in love herself with Ferrers but out to wreck him in revenge for his dislike of her. She persuades her weak husband (Heaven help the Senior Service!) to fix a date for the trials by which the Scorpion cannot possibly be ready; and when these fail and two men are killed, she gets the station closed down. I didn't find her convincing. A woman of such monstrous malice would surely not have been so childishly open in her rudeness, particularly in official circles; and Miss VANNE's personality is altogether too attractive.

These alarms have the effect of breaking down the resolution of Ferrers



THE ETERNAL STREAM

The Rt. Hon. Walter Harrowby, P.C., M.P. . Mr. FELIX AYLME
Rear-Admiral Sir George Helston, Bart., C.B., R.N.
Mr. H. G. STOKER
Lady Helston Miss MARGA VANNE



"I GUESSED THE BUTLER DID IT."

and Karen, and they confess their love. From *Ferrers* Mr. MORGAN has withheld the saving grace of humor, though not from Karen. In the first of their love-scenes *Ferrers*, otherwise a very modest individual, declares he must be worshipped as a god, while in the second, when his whole life has been turned upside-down, he decides he cannot marry a woman who has such knowledge of his failure, in spite of the fact that, as Karen reminds him, she is the only being left who has complete and unshakable faith in him.

Ferrers has refused to give the formal admission of error, useful for Front-Bench purposes, in return for which the *First Lord*, sympathetic to the idea, has offered the Scorpion a further chance; so Karen pretends to have found a fundamental mistake in the formula, and the *First Lord* keeps his promise. A man of *Ferrers*' high mettle might well have been irrecoverably embittered by such a betrayal, even in his own interests, from the one person he trusted; but having gone temporarily over the edge of sanity he returns quite healed.

I think Karen is the better drawn of

the two, a brilliant presentation of a complex character and played by Miss RAWLINGS with a consummate skill which lost nothing of the twin fires of passion and what Mr. MORGAN calls "singleness of mind." *Ferrers* is a tough proposition; there are great heights in the part and some splendid speeches, and there are also moments at which, though a likeable fellow, he is a prig. Mr. TEARLE seemed to me to handle him with feeling and discretion.

The minor characters deserve more space than I can give them. Mr. FELIX AYLMEY, Mr. H. G. STOKER, Mr. ANTHONY IRELAND, Mr. LEO GINN, Mr. LAURIER LISTER, Mr. ROGER MAXWELL and Mr. DESMOND ROBERTS all do yeoman—or should I say marine?—service. Particularly Mr. AYLMEY, who has some excellent lines as a literary statesman and rolls them off his tongue as if he were addressing a farewell dinner at the Carlton Club. ERIC.

H'm

"Mr. Hull's play, which deals with martial relationships, is entitled 'A Pageant of Marriage Down the Ages.'"—*Local Paper*.

Academic at Home

"It would be so much easier if I didn't have to talk to anyone myself," observed the Principal's wife, looking plaintively at her sister across the untidy remains of the tea-party and helping herself to a cold scone.

"But wouldn't that look rather odd, Clara? I mean, you invite them to come, don't you?" Mrs. Pinwhistle sat down rather heavily as she spoke, and kicked off her shoes in an abandoned thank-goodness-they've-all-gone manner.

"I don't invite them to meet me," said the Principal's wife. "They are supposed to be getting to know each other—professors chatting to lecturers' wives and so on, and everyone coming under Henry's all-seeing eye for a minute or two. Have another cup of tea, Sarah? I expect it's stone-cold by now, but I daren't ask Higgins to make any more."

"No. I'll just have one of these nice macaroons. Isn't it extraordinary how one never gets anything to eat at tea-parties?"

"I believe Professor Snooks ate all the cucumber sandwiches," said her sister dreamily. "He was walking round the room with them, and every time he passed me the sandwiches seemed to have dwindled. The seventh time round he offered me one, but there was only a piece of parsley left."

"Surely you don't do this every Sunday afternoon, do you?" inquired Mrs. Pinwhistle, whose husband was in the Indian Army, so that she did not know much about universities and did not care for what she heard.

"No, but when there's a preacher staying with us, or anybody like that, Henry likes to have people in. He calls it throwing the lion to the Christians, and it saves him from having to talk to the preacher all the afternoon, you see."

"Well," said Mrs. Pinwhistle, "they didn't give the bishop much of a run to-day. He spent the whole time barricaded into a corner by that woman with the teeth."

"Oh, dear, did he really?" cried the Principal's wife in distress. "She must have been telling him why her husband didn't go into the Church. It's a very long story. Henry often says he wishes her husband had."

"Had what?"

"Gone into it, of course. But that's what I mean, Sarah, about it being so difficult when I have to talk to people. If Mr. Bliss hadn't been telling me about his researches on haddocks' eggs I should have noticed the poor Bishop and been able to get him into circulation properly."

"But, good heavens, Clara, surely you don't have to listen when people tell you about haddocks? If only you'd have cocktails instead of tea they wouldn't want to talk about such things anyway."

This shocked the Principal's wife, but putting it down to the influence of India she kindly let the remark pass and merely said, "It's much better to let people talk about their own subjects, even if it is haddocks. I learnt that years ago when Henry was an assistant lecturer. That little Mr. Bliss now—he grew so animated that I was quite carried away."

"It would take more than a haddock's egg to carry me away from a party like this one," said Mrs. Pinwhistle sardonically.

"But you see, Sarah, I ought to be watching everyone all the time so that I can make them talk to each other and rescue them from bores and badgers. And if I am trying to be intelligent about fish at the same time I get flustered and throw the wrong people together."

"What you want," said Sarah, "is one of those little boxes they put policemen in so that they can watch the traffic from a great height and tell it what to do."

"Exactly. But I can never remember who hasn't spoken to whom, and whether they are on speaking terms anyway. I believe I entangled Professor Doak twice this afternoon with that woman in green who squints so badly. He didn't look at all pleased."

"Why don't you rush into the fray from time to time and just cry 'General Post!'" asked Mrs. Pinwhistle.

"It wouldn't be the slightest use, my dear. All the men would immediately crowd together in a corner and talk shop, and the women would be left to compare kitchen crises."

"I wouldn't care," said Sarah. "Nothing could be worse than the way that old bearded fellow lectured me about Pictish pots or something."

"Professor Clam? He's a great scholar, Sarah. It's a privilege to listen to him."

"It's not a privilege to watch him dropping crumbs down his waistcoat," retorted Mrs. Pinwhistle with spirit. And then, to save the situation—"But why don't you get Henry to do the shuffling, Clara?"

"Oh, he says it requires a woman's tact, and that anyway it would look as though he wanted to escape from someone himself."

"I should have thought," remarked Sarah, suspecting that her brother-in-law did not suffer fools gladly, "that he often does want to escape."

"Indeed he does. That is why he is so keen on this perpetual motion. In fact the idea originated after that

awful day when Mrs. Bistow—Morbid Anatomy, you know, dear—"

"What?" cried Mrs. Pinwhistle apprehensively.

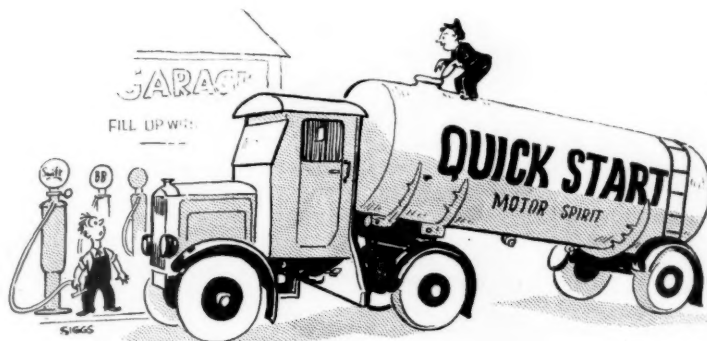
"I mean of course that her husband lectures in it. Well, Henry got hopelessly entangled with her for hours, and she never spoke at all, except once when he thought she said she was fond of snails. Poor Henry felt as if he was entertaining one of her husband's corpses, and he begged me to see that it never happened again."

Mrs. Pinwhistle pensively took the last macaroon and put her shoes on again. "Morbid Anatomy," she said, with her mouth full, "that's what I feel about the lot of them."

"It's very difficult," sighed her sister. "One feels one's position so much at times. How do you manage at your parties in India, dear?"

"Oh, we have great fun. Sometimes Jumbo Jones arrives quite tight, and that always makes a party go well. Then there's Mabel Paramour—she was an actress once, and she does marvellous imitations of the Colonel's wife. I remember once George laughed so much that he spilt a glass of gin down Sally Bantry's neck, and she thought it was a snake. We nearly died! Once we had a big-game hunt in the dining-room with all the lights out, and Paddy said he was a tiger and bit Major Twink in the leg. I shall never forget old Twinky's face!" Mrs. Pinwhistle laughed heartily and just managed not to recall what old Twinky had said.

"I see, dear," said the Principal's wife dejectedly. "It all sounds very gay; but I don't believe we could run our parties quite like that—do you?"



"FIFTEEN HUNDRED GALLONS, PLEASE."

Holiday Tasks

I.—Punctuation (continued)

We now pass gaily to

(3) *The Colon*
and

(4) *The Semicolon.*

Here is a colon, Bobby—

:

and here a semicolon—

;

What we call a semicolon was the question-mark of the Ancient Greeks; and that will show you how Time sweeps on, Things change, Man progresses, etc., etc. CAXTON, we believe, had nothing to do with the semicolon. It is, by his standards, a modern upstart. (It is also, by the way, to our way of thinking, a badly-bred word, and ought to be hemicolon—let that pass.) But Things, as we have noted, change. To-day the semicolon has almost thrust its big brother out of public life. Many of the King's subjects pass from the cradle to the grave without once using the colon. Some go

farther and pronounce him obsolete or affected. Others use him merely as a "Look-what's-here" sign, thus—

"The Prime Minister said: 'This weather's a fair cow.'"

All this, we think, is a pity. The colon still gives fine shades and subtleties, and has a good job of his own. And you, Bobby, must join my Society for the Preservation of the Colon.

* * * * *

The semicolon is merely a kind of senior comma. You have finished a phrase; you have not completed the thought, so do not want a full stop; but the comma does not give sufficient pause. As in

"To err is human; to forgive, divine."

or

"That man's a bounder; and I will biff his boko."

Do not misunderstand me, Bobby. Do not write—

"Dear Granny, I want a rich; round; bilious; pudding,"

for the semicolon follows complete

clauses, not single words or parenthetical phrases.

Still, a man may often use a comma where a semicolon would be better, without being turned out of his clubs.

There is no gross offence in this—

"To err is human, to forgive, divine."

But, we maintain, the semicolon and colon are *not* interchangeable. You might as well say that a sergeant was much the same as a lance-corporal.

This, for example, would be utterly erroneous and loathsome—

"The day was wet: and I took my umbrella."

For the colon, as we understand the matter, is *senior* to the semicolon and must not be put to menial or simple tasks which the comma or semicolon could do as well.

"Its best defined use," says the *O.E.D.*, "is to separate clauses which are grammatically independent and discontinuous, but between which there is an apposition or similar relation of sense. Thus it may introduce an antithetic statement, an illustration, extract, etc. . . . It is also employed to divide prose into metrical periods for chanting."

The great FOWLER expressed his opinion pithily, thus—

"As long as the Prayer-Book version of the Psalms continues to be read, the colon is not likely to pass quite out of use as a stop, chiefly as one preferred by individuals, or in impressive contexts, to the semicolon": but he adds, "*it has acquired a special function*, that of delivering the goods that have been invoiced in the preceding words; it is a substitute for such verbal harbingers as *viz., scil., that is to say, i.e., etc.*"

Anything that is a substitute for *viz.* and *scil.* must be good. But, with great respect, is the great FOWLER quite fair to the colon?

He speaks of "the Prayer-Book version of the Psalms." In that version, halfway through every verse, you will perceive a dear little colon. You will not, we think, discover a verse without one. There are colons even where there is no complete clause, thus—

"For mine eyes have seen: thy salvation." (*Nunc Dimittis. Luke ii.*)

"All sheep, and oxen: yea, and the beasts of the fields;" (*Psalms viii. 7.*)

These colons tell you when to transfer your pleasing warble to the second half of the chant. Also, in many cases, they mark an antithesis, or "apposition," in the sense; they are, as it were,



"FLORENCE, I HAVE A FEELING WE ARE BEING WATCHED."



"DESSAY THERE'S SUMMAT TO BE SAID FUR 'EM."

the hyphen in the see-saw. But they are mainly musical signs, like bars.

* * * * *

Now look at your Bible, Bobby, which the great FOWLER does not seem to have done. There both the semicolon and colon are freely and scientifically used. The colon does not occur unless there is some good ground for it. Look at Psalm i. (The stops in brackets are the Prayer Book version).

"1. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, (:) nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

2. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; (:) and in His law doth he meditate day and night.

4. The ungodly are not so: (:) but are like the chaff, (,) which the wind driveth away."

Observe, Bobby. Verse 1 enumerates smoothly the types of blessedness;

and commas are enough to mark them off. In verse 2 there are two distinct, though related, clauses. The break in the sense is bigger, the pause of the voice is longer. A comma would do, but a semicolon is better; and there is nothing in the sense to justify a colon.

But in verse 4 there is a much more important break.

"The ungodly are not so:"

Why, then, what happens? Or "So what?" as you would say.

"I will tell you," says the colon. "Look out!"

"They are like the chaff which the wind driveth away."

In many verses, as we saw last week, you will find both colon and semicolon, precisely and helpfully used.

"And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good."—*Genesis i. 10.*

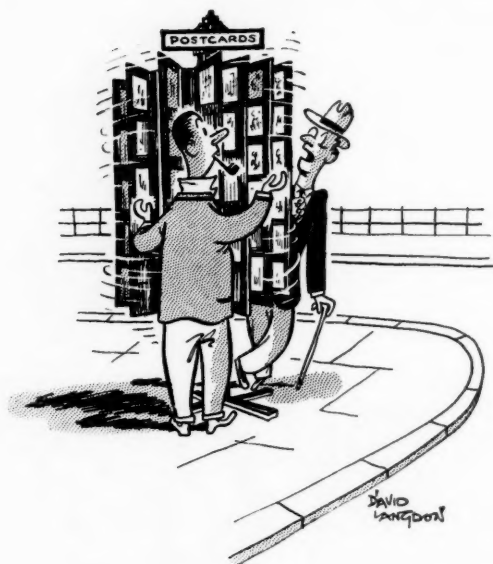
"We remember the fish, which

we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick:

But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes."—*Numbers xi. 5, 6.*

Do you see, Bobby? A colon after "freely" would be too much, for the enumeration is not complete. A comma would not be quite enough, though it would not be criminal. So the semicolon is used. But after "garlick" the first half of the sentence is finished; a new thought is coming, the second section of an antithetical thingummy, the other end of the see-saw. A new inflexion of the voice will be required. The dear colon shows us all this. He is much more than a substitute for *viz.* or *scil.*; and down with the man who dares deny it!

And now, Bobby, if you do not understand the matter, ask Granny about it. We give it up. A. P. H.



"EXCUSE ME, BUT WHAT GIVES YOU THE IMPRESSION THAT THIS WORKS ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE CINEMATOGRAPH?"

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(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Servant of the State

SUPREMELY equipped for the task, Mr. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL carries to a triumphant conclusion in its fourth volume his great work on *Marlborough, His Life and Times* (HARRAP, 25/-). Here, although the strategy of the last victorious campaigns, the desperate conflict at Malplaquet and the battle of wits at Bouchain afford scope for military romance, the main emphasis is on affairs at home. MARLBOROUGH and his brother-in-arms, Prince EUGÈNE, may be holding together on the fields of Flanders a rickety international coalition to defy the monarchy of France, but in Westminster rival political factions wind the issues of peace and war into despicable intrigues round a foolish queen obsessed and dominated by her chamber-woman. QUEEN ANNE and her Abigail, the sinister HARLEY and the venomous ST. JOHN and a host of trifling Whigs and Tories fill the front of the stage, while gigantically illuminated in the background, as Mr. CHURCHILL plays the spotlight, MARLBOROUGH, consistent to one unchanged purpose, wise, tolerant, able at the moment's need to summon a flash of unconquerable genius, moves like a god. Nominally disgraced and overthrown by the Lilliputian politicians, he is still regarded as a prince by the allies his country has betrayed, and the story closes on the triumphant return from exile, the refutation of accusers and something at any rate reasonably approximating to a happy ending. The love between him and his wife—his outrageous, irrepressible, horribly quick-witted SARAH—survives all vicissitudes.

The Young Idea Goes Shooting

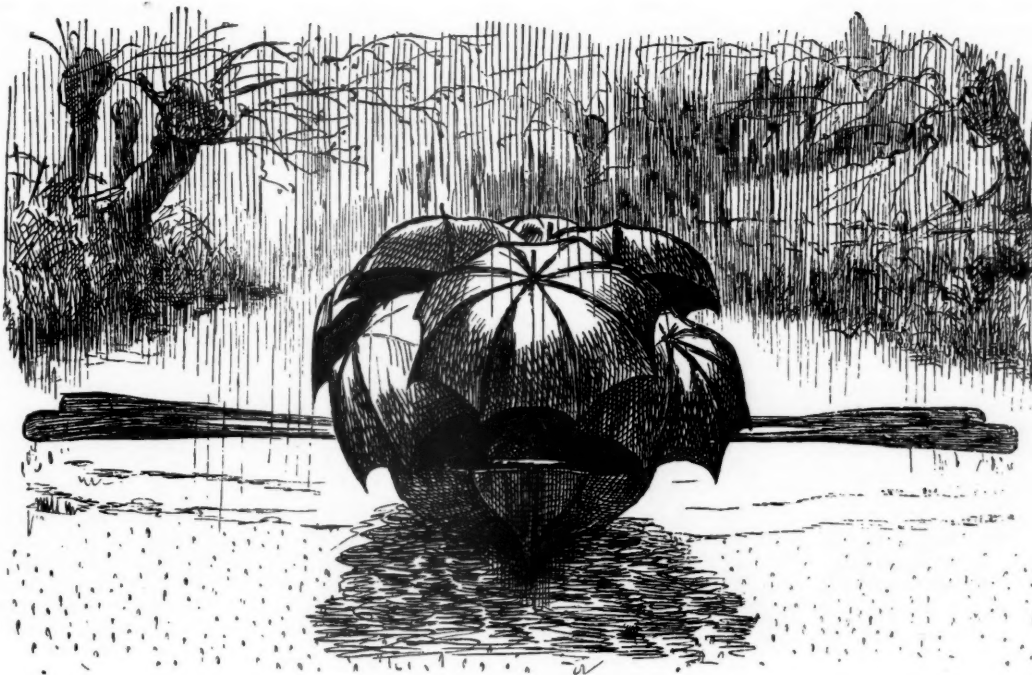
The reader will be unlucky who, dipping into *Coming Out* (FABER AND FABER, 6/-), scorns it as the history of a group of ex-schoolgirls. Though *Avon*, Lady PECK's heroine, is young enough, her efforts to make something worth while of her life, in spite of the opposition of her lazy, charming, conventional mother, soon get her into difficulties likely to have embarrassed anyone twice her age. Her championship of a girl from a Rescue Home leads to a moment when she finds herself, dressed for a Royal Garden Party, holding a screaming baby in Hyde Park; and when, inspired by a fatal fondness for lame dogs and lost causes, she rents a lonely house in Scotland, her ill-assorted house-party proceeds to hurt and disappoint her as though that were the modern equivalent of a "Collins." But for all her pig-headedness *Avon* is a darling and Lady PECK's touch in dealing with social scenes and feminine reactions is a sheer delight. Perhaps it is a sign of wiser times that the greatest adventures—those of the spirit—have their part in this enjoyable novel.

It Was a Famous Victory

Had the Battle of Fontenoy meant the defeat of His Britannic and Hanoverian Majesty's enemies—of LOUIS XV., of the Marshal DE SAXE, of the LALLYS, DILLONS and DRUMMONDS, of their army and, by immediate implication, of the Old and Young Pretenders—we should never have heard the last of it. Actually it was an overwhelming victory for these eventually doomed forces—doomed by the rise of English sea-power, English industrialism and the French Revolution: a victory clinched by SAXE's sound refusal to allow the Scots and Irish to chase the retreating foe. The story of a crucial twenty-four hours, May 11th, 1745, is brilliantly retold in *A Day of Battle* (HAMILTON, 7/6). Mr. VINCENT SHEEAN takes you by lantern-light around the French bivouac of the evening before and you stay on the field till the same lanterns are relit to collect the dead. The whole feat is described with a warmth of sympathy, a tenderness of humour and a poignancy of regret that are



"... AND THERE'S THIS OPHELIA, BOSS, FLOATING DOWN TOWARDS THE RAPIDS! WILL HAMLET GET THERE IN TIME?"



MAKING THE BEST OF IT

George Du Maurier, September 17th, 1881.

the due of so much gallantry, absurdity and mortal waste. It is told in racy and uncontaminated English. It is difficult to think that it could have been told better.

Maid's Tragedy

Because I Must (JARROLD, 8/6) is a grim book, hardly to be recommended to those who go to novels for amusement or the gentler emotions. Others may find it refreshing that Miss HILDA LEWIS has treated murder not as an occasion for entertaining ingenuity but as the tragedy that it actually is. Her first sentence strikes the uncompromising note which is sustained to the end. "I remember the day they hanged my mother." The "I" is *Nellie Woodstock*, who was ten years old when her mother killed her father, and she writes down, in the simple, illiterate, but not unimaginative language in which she would have thought or spoken, the causes of that deed of violence and its consequences to herself. The more obvious of these are dreary years in an orphanage and in domestic service, seduction and motherhood; but secretly her life is dominated

by two obsessions—her dreadful dreams of her unfortunate mother and her determination to rediscover her younger sister, adopted from the orphanage by wealthy folk and apparently, and in intention, separated from her for good. To what end she is driven by these is her pitiful story, which rises to a climax of tragedy more poignant than that earlier one because it is also a tragedy of irony; for *Nellie* destroys herself when happiness is at last within her reach. It is a story as powerful as it is pitiful, and it is sweetened by the charity and understanding which *Nellie* has even for those who most despitely use her.

Self-Help Without Smiles

It's Draughty in Front (JOSEPH, 8/6) starts in an attic near Vauxhall Bridge where a pietist mother and an only too convivial father fight over the golden childhood of Mr. HERBERT HODGE with the pertinacity of the lion and the unicorn. This inauspicious opening, however, leads to ultimate fame (drama and the B.B.C.), though taxi-driving is still the staple of a life whose chief ends have always

been artistic integrity and personal freedom. Of all mortal aims these are perhaps the hardest of achievement by the industrial poor; and with inevitable condescensions to shoddy and servitude the writer passes from baker's boy to laundry carman and Communist agitator in England, and from lumber-jack to cowman, professional fire-fighter and garage-hand in Canada. On his return he forfeits his deposit as Fascist candidate for Limehouse and serves three years as a private chauffeur in the interests of a comparatively leisured apprenticeship to writing. He is now, he maintains, a Socialist, though a widely distributed personal ownership is obviously the only foundation for his particular brand of democratic individualism. His book, written with a deliberate crudity that both makes and mars it, is a document not to be missed.

Light-Hearted Voyage

The voyage to the South Seas by way of Panama of the yacht *Monsoon*—whose precise build and rig, by the way, are nowhere specified—was undertaken and carried out in the spirit of light-hearted adventure suggested by the title of Mr. HAKON MIELCHE's account of it, *Let's See if the World is Round* (HODGE, 12/6). Both the wherewithal and an objective—other than that indicated in Mr. MIELCHE's title—for the expedition were furnished by the collecting *en route* of ethnographical and other specimens; and the chapter which describes the resulting "great summer sale" in the New Hebrides and the rifling of the assembly hut with its gruesome relics, is one of the most entertaining in the book. There is also a lively description of a visit to the Galapagos group, and a glimpse of the extraordinary collection of ultra-Bloomsbury intellectuals the author met there, little thinking how soon their affectations and unrealities were to be transformed into genuine tragedy. Gaiety is, however, not invariably the keynote of Mr. MIELCHE's commentary. He has his graver moments, and the account of the leper village on Lifou in the Loyalty Group is one which is calculated to linger long in the memory. The translator's work is excellently done—if, that is, one may judge of it by the fact that, but for an express statement to the contrary, English might be taken as the narrative's original medium.

Through Dark Glasses

Someone has been creeping up behind Mr. DENIS MACKAIL and insinuating that writing novels about decent people and stopping at a point where everyone is not either broken or buried simply isn't done nowadays. The result is *Morning, Noon and Night* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), a new long novel in which things end really well for nobody and, though

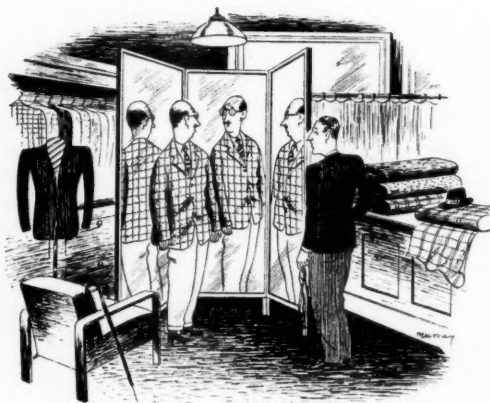
Mr. MACKAIL with wonted gallantry cannot resist the charm of two of his ladies, there is a pretty good assortment of knaves, fools, bullies and beasts generally, male and female. Of course the two "Noons"—or the Eleven and Twelve—claim most of our attention, though "Night"—*General Sir Hereward Hamblin*—is a portrait of an old gentleman, of a certain sort, supreme in a gallery full of living faces. Mr. MACKAIL has been clever about it all too—his waster comes in so disguised that at first the reader only mildly wonders why he should let a hero talk like that, and not till the last page does it plainly appear that our author has deliberately thrown away his rose-coloured spectacles. More's the pity!

The Poles Asunder

When LINCOLN ELLSWORTH's name, through his association with AMUNDSEN, became familiar to all of us who were even remotely interested in Arctic exploration, the fact that his life had already been exceptionally adventurous was not generally known. Readers, however, of *Beyond Horizons* (HEINEMANN, 12/6) will soon discover that before he started upon the work that he so dearly loved he had already been nearly shot, nearly drowned and nearly run over by a locomotive engine. As the son of a wealthy man he, with his desire to live dangerously, was a constant source of anxiety to his father, and the contest between two determined men is graphically described. In this volume Mr. ELLSWORTH neither magnifies nor minimises the success that he has won both in the Antarctic and Arctic, and the records of what he and others have accomplished make a most stirring tale of adventure. NANSEN, it is true, said that flying machines had knocked the romance out of Polar exploration, but the glamour of it remains and will remain.

Too Clever

Miss DOROTHY BOWERS is a promising addition to the mystery-battalion of novelists, and although *Postscript to Poison* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) runs along familiar lines it is noteworthy both for its restrained style and its careful construction. Mrs. Lackland of Lacklands, a supremely odious old lady, deserved drastic punishment, but when she was poisoned the cloistered calm of the cathedral town of Minsterbridge was rudely interrupted. Anonymous letters too were flying about, and altogether Minsterbridge at the moment was not behaving any too well. Then a poor little maid from Lacklands was strangled, and had not the perpetrator of these outrages become too confident it is at least doubtful if Chief-Inspector Pardoe would have been able to make an arrest. A neat story.



"OF COURSE, SIR, YOU MUST BEAR IN MIND THERE WON'T ALWAYS BE FOUR OF YOU."

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Charivaria

THE Lambeth Walk has become popular in Paris. There are Frenchmen who fear that a wave of hectic English gaiety is sweeping over the Continent.

★ ★ ★

"HARLEY STREET.
GOOD HUNTING."

Headings to "Estate Market" column in "The Times."

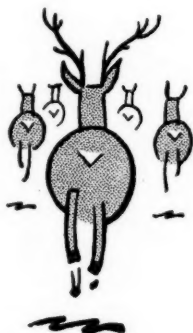
Yoicks!

★ ★ ★

The recent return of summer weather, we are told, caused many migratory birds, that had started on their long flight south, to turn back suddenly. First holding out one wing of course to warn those just behind.

★ ★ ★

A night-watchman who disappeared for a week has now returned home. Anxiety was first felt when it was discovered that his shelter had not been slept in.



★ ★ ★

An actress says that she gets up very early and strolls through Richmond Park to rehearse her part for a new play. She refers very gratefully to her deer public.

★ ★ ★

Somebody has invented a transparent umbrella. Very handy for seeing the owner in time.

★ ★ ★

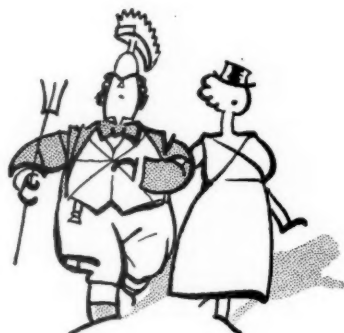
Take Your Choice

"A Special Edition of the Echo will be published to-night giving a report of Hitler's vital speech to the Nazi Congress at Nuremberg. Peace or war in Europe may depend on his declaration.

A report of the Lincoln City v. New Brighton match will also appear with results of other League matches."—*Lincoln Echo*.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent in a contemporary asks for a new recipe for cooking apples. Stew them gently and garnish with roast duck.



One of the South Africans playing in the Rugby Test Match against the English Fifteen wore a beard. That shouldn't be so hard to pull off as ears.

★ ★ ★

From the Horse's Mouth

"Gordon Richards rode a waiting race on Pasch, the hot favourite, but his mount failed to say."—*Daily Paper*.

★ ★ ★

Authorities at Cape Town say that films shown to natives in their tribal state should convey an elevating and ennobling picture of Western civilisation. So the news-reels are ruled out.

★ ★ ★

There is a scarcity of football referees in the West Country. It seems the spectators are more wasteful with them than they are in the North.

★ ★ ★

An engineer predicts that one day London tube railways will extend to south coastal resorts. Passengers will then have the satisfaction of knowing that they are passing under some of the prettiest scenery in England.

★ ★ ★

In Birmingham alone five hundred million pins are turned out, according to *Tilt-Bits*. It's a wonder they don't stick into somebody.

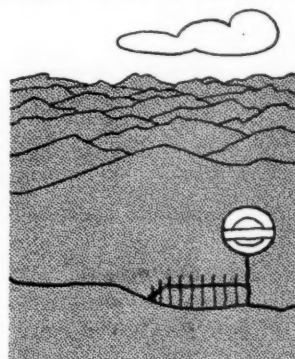
★ ★ ★

"I would not mind having, for instance, Van Dycks, or other Dutch or Flemish masters, or, if you like, Italians. We have acquired sam already."—*Report of Herr Hitler's Nuremberg Speech*.

Will he pick up his musket?

★ ★ ★

A motoring correspondent maintains that if horses disappeared from our main streets altogether it would be better for everybody. Anyway it would solve the Lady Godiva problem.





"WE'VE MISSED THE NEWS, EDITH."

Adventures in Autarchy

General Bombfitz clamped the telephone receiver down with an exclamation of annoyance. He heaved himself out of the swivel-chair behind his desk and wandered over to the window. He stood there for a while frowning down at the Wilhelmstrasse, blinking hard to keep back his tears.

I moved uncomfortably in my chair. "And what," I asked, "did the British Prime Minister say?"

General Bombfitz blew his nose and gazed at me sourly.

"He says it's no use my keeping on worrying him; he's not going to give us anything more."

"Not even the Danube Basin?" I exclaimed in dismay.

The General shook his head.

"Not even a bit of Basutoland," he said.

I meditated for a few moments. I have a very fertile brain. My inventions had rapidly raised me from a humble apothecary in a Hamburg side-street to Chief Commissioner for Sundry Substitutes in the Reich. It was I who first conceived the idea of

re-heeling men's shoes with tin lids from old marmalade pots. The national saving in shoe-leather was enormous.

"Supposing," I said at last, "that we were to make a substitute colony?"

General Bombfitz's face brightened. "A substitute colony?" he echoed.

I worked out the details swiftly in my head.

"We could dig two tunnels under Poland," I said, "and extract the subsoil from under Russia."

The General's eyes gleamed eagerly. He hopped from one leg to the other with excitement.

"Go on!" he said. "And then?"

I walked over to the large map of the world hanging on the wall opposite the window. I pointed with my finger at a spot in the Atlantic Ocean.

"And then," I said, "we could dump it here."

The General examined the spot shrewdly through half-closed eyes.

"M-yes," he said.

He picked up the telephone again.

"Hullo!" he called. "Is that the secretary of the Strength through Joy organisation?"

A voice squawked assent.

"I would like a million of your members," said the General, "to dig

a couple of tunnels under Poland and extract the subsoil from under Russia. Do you think they would enjoy that?"

There was another much louder squawk from the other end. It sounded as though the person had fainted. The General rang off and looked at me with a self-satisfied expression on his face.

"We'll start to work on it right away," he said. "And I want you to superintend the dumping of the subsoil."

I accompanied a small fleet of cargo-boats and lighters to the Atlantic Ocean and superintended the dumping of the subsoil. While we were in the midst of the work a British cruiser came nosing round and the Commander bustled on board my yacht. He asked me what all this mess was we were making. I hid the plans of our new colony behind my back.

"The merchant navy of the Reich is having its annual spring-cleaning," I said, "and it's astounding what a lot of dust comes out from under the captains' bunks."

The Commander, watching the sacks of earth being emptied over the sides of the ships, looked astounded. I held my breath and wondered whether he would believe me.

He believed me. He went back on board his cruiser and steamed away; but I saw him glance over his shoulder once or twice as though some vague kind of doubt still clung to his mind.

At length the new colony rose above sea-level and began to take on a shape rather like Australia. I went round myself adding the finishing touches to it, ordering another little estuary to be put here and another little isthmus there. Then I returned to Berlin. I was met at the station by two agents of the Gestapo. They told me to report myself to Herr Hammer at his country residence.

I reported myself at his country residence. I was shown on to a verandah where His National Importance was reclining on a chaise-longue sewing a button on an old brown shirt. He pushed his work-basket hastily out of sight as I approached and, spreading out a large newspaper upside-down in front of him, pretended to be deeply engrossed in it. He waited until I had clicked my heels and saluted him and then he lowered the newspaper on to his lap. He looked at me with a face as black as thunder. He took out a letter from his pocket and gave it to me without saying a word. I ran my eye over it. It was an ultimatum from the Russian Government. The loss of the subsoil had been discovered and it

was requested that we should hand it back at our earliest convenience.

"And what," asked His National Importance, "have you done with it?"

"I have dumped it into the Atlantic Ocean," I said.

He rang a little cow-bell standing on the table near his elbow and a storm-trooper appeared in a white bath-robe with a pencil and notebook stuffed in his sponge-bag. He took down a letter to the Russian Government and goose-stepped away to arrange for the subsoil to be returned.

"And whose idea was it?" asked His National Importance. "Yours or General Bombfitz's?"

I felt the instinct of self-preservation nudge me inside.

"It was General Bombfitz's," I said.

His National Importance grunted. "Then General Bombfitz will be dismissed from his post," he said, "and you will substitute him."

I went at once to General Bombfitz and I substituted him. I placed him in a potted meat jar and labelled him "Best Beef Extract." I sent him to Herr Hammer by registered post.

The next day I received a telephone call. It was His National Importance.

"Thank you so much for that little gift you sent me," he said.

I bowed to the telephone.

"It was a duty and a pleasure," I lisped.

"The pleasure," he said, "was mine. I enjoyed every mouthful of it."

I nearly dropped the receiver.

"You don't mean to say," I stammered, "that you have eaten it?"

He admitted that this was so. "I had it spread on sandwiches last night for supper," he said.

A chill ran through my veins. My tin heels began to rattle on the linoleum.

"But do you realise, Your Importance," I said, "that you have eaten a General?"

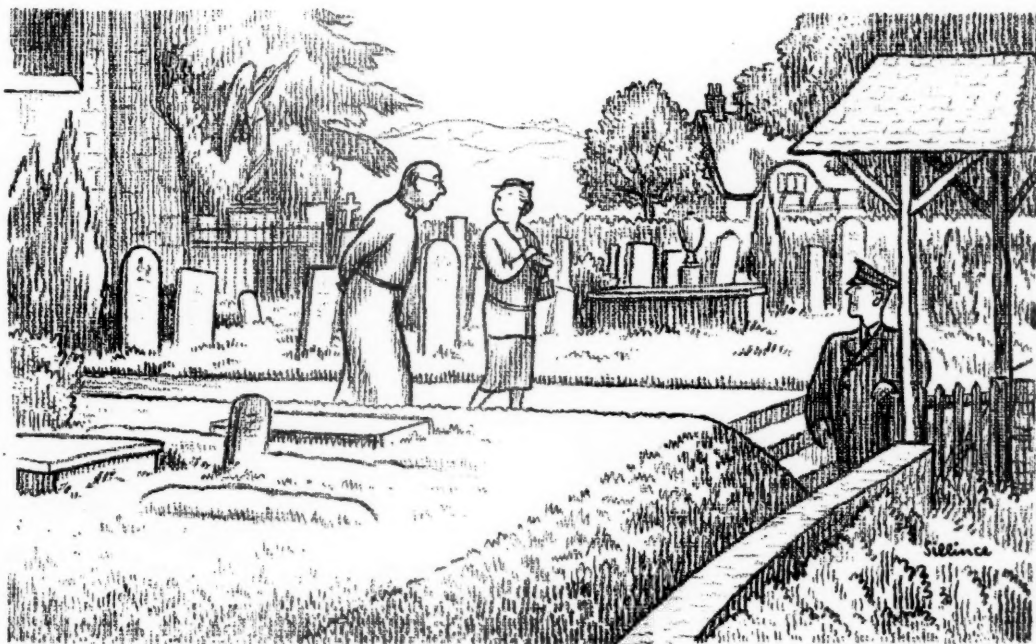
There was a shocked silence at the other end. "Eaten a what?" he asked after a pause.

"You have eaten," I said, "General Bombfitz."

I heard a peculiar noise at the other end. It sounded as though a pair of lips had been smacked.

"Then perhaps," insinuated His Importance, "you could send me another one from time to time?"

I sent him another one from time to time. I sent him a potted General every fifteen days or so, and when Generals grew scarce I sometimes sent him a retired Admiral. On Christmas Day, as a special treat, I sent him a Jewish financier imported from London. On Boxing Day he sent me to a concentration camp.



"... AND SIR FRANCIS HAS ORDERED A CASE OF BEST AUSTRALIAN APPLES FROM COVENT GARDEN FOR YOUR HARVEST FESTIVAL."

The Way of a Dove

WHERE all the waking birds sing "*Heil!*"—
 They tell me—in Bavarian woods,
 Lifting their tiny claws meanwhile
 From underneath their leafy hoods
 To greet the Leader as he toys
 With vegetarian repasts,
 And Nazi girls and Nazi boys
 In unison sing counterblasts.

What wings were these? What sound of hope?
 A phoenix or a turtle-dove—
 A kingfisher—a phalarope—
 Dropping to earth from heaven above?
 With Europe's prayers to aid his flight,
 With all the people's loud acclaim,
 Having his luggage for the night,
 The Premier of England came.

Of all the world's momentous hops
 From shore to shore, was ever one—
 Peace-bearer on the mountain-tops—
 So neatly and so nicely done?
 Alone, aloof the Leader sat;
 His bodyguard, we must presume,
 Received the English statesman's hat
 And bore his suitcase to his room.

What words he spoke, what strength, what tact.
 What kindly counsel held the field
 Long ere the sponge had been repacked
 Now as I write is not revealed.
 There are who say that hopes are faint
 And what must be must be endured;
 There are who think the sad complaint
 Of plebiscitis can be cured.

But this remains. The PREMIER flew:
 He did the thing that seemed the best,
 He sought the eyrie where the new
 Imperial eagle builds his nest.
 He chose the course that was not weak;
 He seized, as with the strength of ten,
 Time by the forelock, so to speak,
 And bearded Bismarck in his den. EVOE.

"Onward Be Our Footsteps Pressing . . ."

THE Headmaster adjusted his spectacles and rose to his feet.

"It is my custom," he said, glancing down at the papers on the table before him, "at the beginning of a new school year to say a few words to those of you who have come for the first time to join our little family here at Perivale's. It is a very happy little family this to which I now bid you welcome. And to-day is a big day, a very important day in the life of each one of you. You are feeling a little strange perhaps in these new surroundings, some of you a little frightened at this your first venture into a larger world outside the sheltering walls—"

A brisk cough caused him to look up and encounter the dour gaze of Marrowby, the Mathematics master.

"Well, Marrowby?" he asked vaguely.

"I fancy you are reading your address to the New Boys, Sir. This is the Staff Meeting."

"Of course, of course, of course. Thank you, Marrowby. The staff—yes. Of course." The Headmaster's air of benevolence gave way to that look of confused despair he always wore in the presence of his assistants. He gnawed the ends of his moustache soberly as he hunted about for his sheet of notes. "Of course," he said again.

"Good-bye, Mr. Chips!" murmured Siggs sadly. Siggs looks after the football mostly, but he has his cultured side.

"Now," said the Headmaster briskly, "I have a note here about—ah, yes, let me see—about blotting-paper. It appears that for some reason—what is it exactly about the blotting-paper, Weston?"

"I just mentioned to you, Headmaster, that we seemed to have used an unnecessary amount of blotting-paper last term. I didn't mean—"

"Exactly. Too much blotting-paper. Mr. Weston will have something to say to us later on about extravagance in the use of blotting-paper. Meanwhile there are one or two other points to discuss. There is the question of Mr. Marson's work. I know you will all be glad to hear that Mr. Marson hopes to be fully recovered and back again with us in three or four weeks' time at the most, so that it will hardly be necessary to obtain temporary assistance, which is always so unsettling. Mr. Weston and I have made a slight rearrangement of the time-table, which I think covers the ground. For the first and third periods on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays Mr. Marson's French set will join Mr. Clough's in Old School; on Tuesday afternoons the Upper Third go to Mr. Marrowby, and I am asking Mr. Siggs to take geography—"

"But, Headmaster—"

"What in God's name—!"

"... positively Gilbertian . . ."

"Is it proposed," demanded Clough's steely voice, cutting through the general clamour, "that I should teach French and History to two different lots of boys at the same time? Or am I merely to teach History with a French accent? Because in either case—"

"A copy of the revised time-table will be found in the Common Room," said the Headmaster hastily. "We must all put up with a little inconvenience until Mr. Marson returns, must not we? In the meantime you will be interested in certain improvements which have been carried out at the back of the gymnasium. Yes, yes, at the back of the gym. We have made great changes at the back of the gym during the past holidays. The observatory has been repainted; a new path has been made to Upper Meadows; the old bicycle-sheds have been swept away to make room for— What exactly have the old bicycle-sheds been swept away to make room for, Weston?"

"New bicycle-sheds, Sir."

"Exactly. New bicycle-sheds. They will, I think, be found a great improvement on the old. When they are finished—"

"When will that be?"

"Quite soon, Marrowby, quite soon, I understand. Every effort is being made."

"And where are the boys to put their bicycles until they are ready?"

"Quite so, yes. Thank you. That is a point we must talk over together some time. Possibly Matron—"

"Matron has nothing whatever to do with the boys' bicycles. I have been solely responsible for the bicycles for the last five years, and if the old sheds are no longer available for them it is my duty to see that alternative accommodation is provided. It is all very well for people to laugh, but if these



STILL HOPE

Shakespeare and Uncle Egbert

UNCLE Egbert has never liked Shakespeare. He says frankly that even at school *Henry V.* left him perfectly cold, and he doesn't remember anything about any of the others.

Unfortunately both Uncle Egbert's acquaintance with the works of Shakespeare and his rather violent prejudice against the Bard of Avon have been very much increased through the agency of the dear Trevors, who ask people to lunch and tea and dinner and make them play games. And owing to the literary proclivities of the Trevors, Shakespeare, by the most frightful bad luck, is always turning up in these games.

So nobody was surprised, though several were annoyed, when Uncle Egbert—expected within a few hours at the dinner-table of the Trevors—suddenly said he wasn't going.

"Not going?" said everybody except old Miss Littlemug, who just said, "Oh, dear—Hitler" over the paper, and Aunt Emma, who said, "Nonsense, dear! Of course you're going."

"Not to the Trevors, I'm not," replied Uncle Egbert, evidently meaning to convey that he would be ready enough to obey a Royal Command from Buckingham Palace, or to go and address the Woman's Institute on "The Song-Birds of Ceylon," but that there it would begin and end.

"Dear," said Aunt Emma rather movingly, "they *want* you."

"I'm not going," said Uncle Egbert, and Aunt Emma said afterwards that in nearly five-and-thirty years of married life she had never been so defied before.

"I'm not going to play any of their dam' games," said Uncle Egbert, become utterly wild and reckless. "I haven't forgotten what happened last time."

"What, Uncle Egbert?"

"Trevor kept on asking me to guess who he was. As though," said Uncle Egbert passionately, "I hadn't known the fellow for years."

"But it was a game, dear," said Aunt Emma. "He was being a character out of Sh—out of a book."

Uncle Egbert's utterly unjust reply was simply that you couldn't call Shakespeare a book. But he made it evident that you could call him other things—and a good many of them were quite unsuited to the drawing-room.

So Laura—Uncle Egbert's favourite, because he once danced with her youngest great-aunt at the Brighton

Assembly Rooms in the early 'sixties—suggested that we should try to make him a bit more Shakespeare-minded before going to the Trevors' party.

"I'm not going," Uncle Egbert muttered—but more faintly.

"Now, Uncle Egbert," Laura said very kindly, "I'm sure you know quite a lot of Shakespeare really. In your subconscious mind, you know. Just tell me what your immediate reaction is when I say, for instance, *Romeo and Juliet*."

"Those people who looked out of a window," said Uncle Egbert with distaste.

"And when I say *Othello*?"

Uncle Egbert's reply was to the effect that the fellow was a dago.

The next test question, concerning *The Tempest*, was an absolute failure, because Uncle Egbert only said that there never had been and never would such an actress as Marie.

It was quite a long time before Laura could go on.

"*Shylock* ? " she then said.

"Don't talk about them, dear," said Miss Littlemug from inside her newspaper. "If only one could get at Hitler *personally*."

"Mussolini is the man to go for, in my opinion," said Uncle Egbert—and there was another rather long digression while Miss Littlemug and Uncle

Egbert told us all the things they would have told Herr Hitler and Signor Mussolini if only those gentle violets had been there instead of us.

So after that Laura only had time for one more question.

"You remember *Hamlet*, Uncle Egbert, don't you?"

"Fellow with a skull," said Uncle Egbert sullenly.

"Yes, that's frightfully good. I *said* you knew a lot more Shakespeare than you thought you did. And what did he say?"

"The quality of mercy isn't strained," Uncle Egbert suggested.

"Well, no, it wasn't exactly that. Not really."

"Now then," said Charles, entering the room, "what about this party? Are we going or are we not?"

And Uncle Egbert with the utmost fluency replied, "To be or not to be, that is the question."

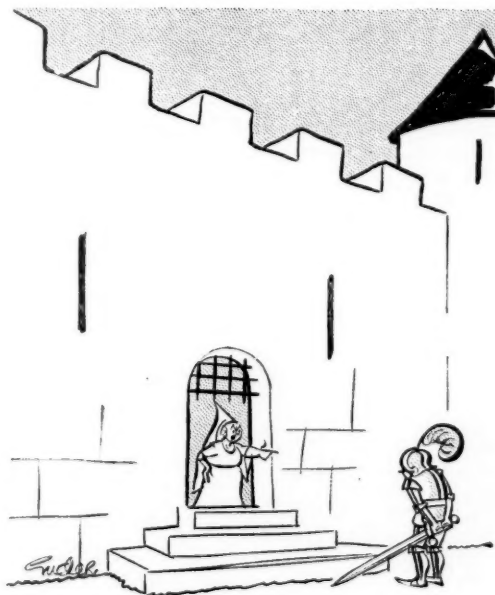
Everybody said "There!"

Uncle Egbert, looking thoroughly bewildered, explained that he'd only been quoting from his dear old cousin Thomas, whose favourite expression it was.

It took Laura the whole of the drive to the Trevors' house to try to get things clear between Uncle Egbert, his old Cousin Thomas and Shakespeare.

And after all they played bridge.

E. M. D.



"RUPERT—YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING AGAIN!"

At the Pictures

ANYTHING FOR A LAUGH

The Adventures of Marco Polo has been made with an absolutely unscrupulous disregard for anything but the immediate effect. The note is struck before we have seen anything but words on the screen: here is the usual scroll (on one side—Art, you know), with the usual sort of information on it—"Seven hundred years ago"—and then (new paragraph and implied wink): "He was also the first travelling salesman." There you have it: the first Travelling Salesman Story. Have you heard the one about the travelling salesman and the Emperor's daughter when everybody wore fancy-dress?

GARY COOPER is wasted as *Marco Polo*, and *Marco Polo* is wasted as GARY COOPER. This is possibly the first artistically negligible film that Mr. COOPER has ever been mixed up in. The same is true of Mr. ROBERT E. SHERWOOD, whose honoured name is for a startling instant visible among the credit titles. The whole thing is based on moment-to-moment effects. BASIL RATHBONE is the smooth villain, *Ahmed*; SIGRID GURIE is the Emperor's daughter; GEORGE BARBIER, of all people, is the Emperor in question, *Kublai Khan* (no mention of any sons—all he has, like any other screen millionaire, is one beloved daughter).

Bearing everything in mind I think it shows great delicacy on the part of all concerned that when *Marco Polo* leaves his guards at the border of *Kaidu's* territory with the remark "You'll see me again," one of them says "Yes?" and not "Oh yeah?" For, after all, "Oh yeah?" would infallibly have got a laugh, and to the makers of this picture very little else seems to have mattered.

So good is DANIELLE DARRIEUX in *The Rage of Paris* that it is tempting to give her the credit for the whole film; and there is plenty of credit to give. It is not important or significant, nor has it any message (except the favourite Hollywood one, "Don't marry a man for his money, because someone you really love will come along with more"), but it is exceedingly well made, and Miss DARRIEUX

proves to be as good a comedienne in English as she was a tragedienne in French. The first sequence of *The Rage of Paris* is a model of acting, direction, photography, cutting and everything



AN EMPEROR AND HIS LEFT-HAND MAN

Kublai Khan GEORGE BARBIER
Ahmed BASIL RATHBONE

else; it has a genuine rhythm of its own—however precious that remark may sound. Miss DARRIEUX is by no means the only good player in this



THE UNWELCOME HOST

Gloria Patterson HELEN BRODERICK
Nicole de Cortillon DANIELLE DARRIEUX
Mike MISCHA AUER
James Trevor DOUGLAS FAIRBANKS, JNR.

highly entertaining picture, which includes also MISCHA AUER and HELEN BRODERICK; nor does she alone make it worth seeing; but she alone would make it worth seeing.

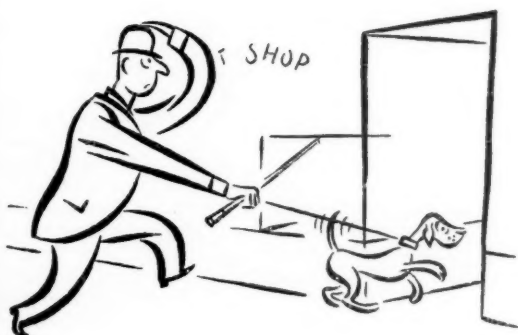
It will be a great pity if *This Man is News* is killed with kindness. It is not as good as *The Thin Man*, it is not the best British-made film for years, it is not a lifelike picture of what goes on in a British newspaper-office, and people who go to see it in the belief that it is all these things may be disproportionately hard on it. It is fast, it is entertaining, it has several good bits of acting and direction, I recommend it, and I wouldn't mind seeing it again; that is as far as I'll go. But that is quite a way.

It is a murder story with all the old tricks: the mysterious gun poked round the corner, the master-mind villain (oh, the brute—he hurts his white mice), and so on. It is also a newspaper story with all the old tricks: the butt news-editor, the held front-page, and so on. The refreshing thing about it is the fact that some of it is new, and new not merely in British films. BARRY K. BARNES is good as the reporter hero, ALASTAIR SIM is excellent as the news-editor butt. VALERIE HOBSON seems not quite comfortable in the part of the reporter's wife.

Incidentally this picture puts on record the fact that many young British reporters do their best to imitate the young American reporters they see on the films—though I doubt whether that particular fact was what its makers thought they were recording.

Vivacious Lady I think rather overdoes the short-hand at the critical point of the whole story: the actual moment when the New York night-club singer (GINGER ROGERS) agrees, after a few hours' acquaintance, to marry the shy, earnest assistant professor of botany (JAMES STEWART). We never see this moment; chiefly, I imagine, because it would be so hard to make credible. The two principals succeed brilliantly in suggesting two young people in love, but I don't know that they succeed in suggesting the particular two who would have made such a quick marriage.

But this point does not in the least matter at the time. *Vivacious Lady* is a thoroughly amusing film, well done. If you have never seen Miss ROGERS not in a "musical," by all means see how excellent she is here. If you have seen all her other films of course you will go to this one anyway. R. M.



Holiday Tasks

II.—The Hyphen

EXERCISE

- (1) Have you the dimmest notion why the hyphen is so called?
- (2) What is it for?
- (3) Is it a good thing?
- (4) Does it matter?
- (5) Which of these is right?—

Blackbird, black-bird—to-day, today
 —Major - General, Major General
 Majorgeneral—footnote, foot-note—
 co-exist, coexist—cooperate, co-
 operate—common sense, common-
 sense—good day, good-day—good-will,
 goodwill, good will—summer-time,
 summertime, summer time—seaplane,
 sea-plane, sea plane—seashore, sea-
 shore—half-an-hour, half an hour—
 stage door-keeper, stage-door keeper,
 stage door keeper—ex-stage door-
 keeper, ex-stage-door-keeper, ex-stage-
 door keeper—ex-Lord Mayor, ex-Lord-
 Mayor, ex Lord Mayor.

- (6) Do you feel ill?

Answers

(1) No. But I will tell you. It is the result of putting two Greek words to-gether—*ὑπο*, under, and *εν*, one=“under one.”

- (2) Wait a minute.

(3) No. It is an ugly thing and a darned nuisance. But in this complex modern world it is useful and necessary, and, like other tools, should be intelligently used.

(4) Yes. It may matter quite a lot. Consider the following—

- “a little-expected lady”
- “a little expected lady”
- “there is no indecency by-law”



“CONFOUND YOU—MUST YOU SLAP SO HARD?”
 “YES, SIR. TELLS THE OFFICE I’M READY FOR THE
 NEXT, SIR.”

- “there is no indecency by law”
- “a red hot poker”
- “a red-hot poker”
- “she is a man-of-war”
- “she is a man of war”
- “a superfluous hair-remover”
- “an anti-trade unionist”
- “the anti-Home Rule campaign.”

- (2) and (5) Well, let us see.

The hyphen, Bobby, is a device for killing one bird with two stones. The inventive English, perceiving a black bird and noting that it was different from a nightingale or swallow, could still think of no particular name for it. So they called it the Black-bird; and in those days, I suppose, it had a hyphen, for the compound was new. But it became fixed and familiar; it ran smoothly; the hyphen was dropped

and a new name was born. This happens often—as in hairpin, schoolgirl, upstairs, footnote, seaplane, fairyland, childbirth, downhill, noonday. The more often it can happen the better, for the hyphen, as we have said, is not ornamental, and cannot be loved for its looks alone.

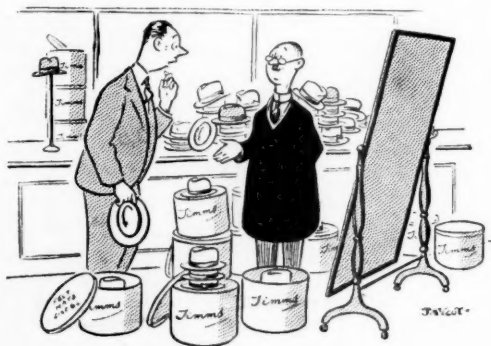
But it must happen according to the rules, “they” say. To cast off its hyphen for good a compound noun must have *but one accent*, become by usage familiar as a single word, and be guilty of no unsightliness or awkwardness (like “cooperate” or “waterrat”).

The single accent must be on the *first* of the two partners; and, as a rule, in the merging process, the accent has been shifted from the second word to the first. Look.

- “There is a black bird !”
- “There is a blackbird !”
- “Greenwich Mean Time”
- “In the meantime”
- “A black shirt”
- “A Blackshirt.”

Where there are more than one accent there can be no such compound, and the words must remain separate (“black game,” “black eye,” “black books”) or remain for ever hyphenated (“black-list,” “black-leg”). Nature’s summertime is one word (or has a hyphen), but Mr. WILLETT’S summer time is two (for “it fails to pass the accent test”).

Well, that is what they say, Bobby. And so, though you may write “blackberry,” you must not write “blackberrypie” but “blackberry-pie”; “coexist” but “co-operate,” “seaplane” and “seaweed” but “sea-



“NONE OF THEM SUITS ME. HOW DO I LOOK WITH-
 OUT ONE?”



"SO YOU ARE THE OLDEST INHABITANT?"

"WELL, STRICTLY SPEAKIN', MY WIFE BE, BUT SHE WARN'T 'AVE IT."

breeze" and "sea-shore," "seanemone" and "sea air."

"Seaside," we should have thought, might drop its hyphen without shattering the rules; and our *Oxford Dictionary* makes it optional. But the excellent *Rules for Compositors and Readers* at the University Press, Oxford, insists on "sea-side." Which shows you again what fun it is to be a writer.

Also, at the risk of losing our clubs, we should like to slip the hyphens of "to-day," "to-morrow," and "to-night." But the lexicographers and experts are massed against us.

* * * * *

Let us pass now to another corner of this fascinating theme.

So far, Bobby, we have been having fun with compound nouns. Compound adjectives (or adjectival nouns) are another worry, for the same words may abhor a hyphen at one time and hotly demand it another. But do not quail: it is quite simple. Common sense requires no hyphen (we *think*),

but a common-sense solution does. You wash up after supper; but the result is washed-up plates.

* * * * *

We turn with unconcealed reluctance and dismay to the gentleman who keeps or used to keep the stage door (Question 5). For, frankly, we are not quite sure what the answer is. Once we rashly wrote about such a gentleman in a work of fiction, and, while the proofs were in the house, he kept us awake for days. No dictionary gives us guidance: the great FOWLER does not mention him.

"Stage door" is well enough, we feel—two words, no hyphen. "Door-keeper" (or "doorkeeper") is right, by itself. But "stage doorkeeper" will not do, for that might mean a "theatrical" doorkeeper (as in "stage journalist" or "stage army"). Besides, it puts too much emphasis on the stage. "Stage-door-keeper" would be safe; but two hyphens are tiresome. And suppose the man retires and be-

comes an ex-stage-door-keeper! On the whole, we incline to "stage-door keeper" (but "ex-stage-door keeper" is impossible); or "stage-doorkeeper"; and we advise you not to have such men in your novels.

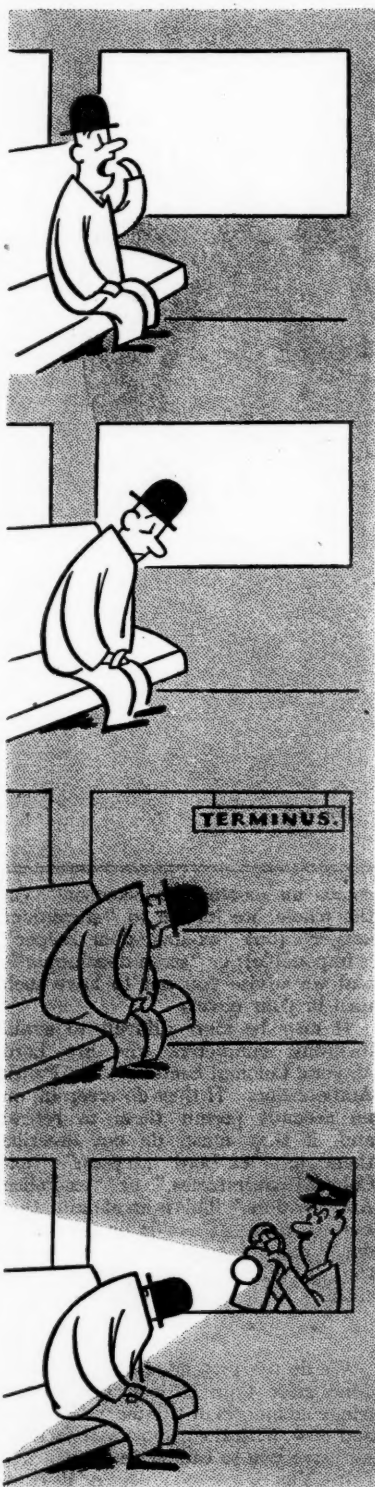
It may be more difficult to avoid including characters who are Lord Mayors, Colonial Secretaries or Polish Ambassadors. If they do creep in, on no account permit them to retire: and, if they must, do not describe them as "ex-Lord Mayors," "ex-Colonial Secretaries," or "ex-Polish Ambassadors." This is an abomination but common. There is no good way out. You must go round, and avoid the *ex*, which is not pleasing any time.

* * * * *

We do not pretend, Bobby, to have done more than to lead you to the fringe or margin of this fearful swamp: and now, with the utmost satisfaction, we leave you to tumble in.

(6) YES.

A. P. H.



Ballade of the Warm South

You travel your way; I will travel mine.

A twelve-month memory has worked its spell.

I must go back. I do not seek a sign.
A sign? The very word is like a knell!
Give me that inch and I will take my ell;

Another fortnight and I shall be gone!

The swallows twitter high, and I can tell

The mulberries are ripe in Carcassonne.

Sunshine on double ramparts, columbine

In orchards with September pimpernel;

The scent of wood-smoke, wine, prodigious wine

Such as no sallow Northern merchants sell.

Dig out my bags, *sans pli et sans bretelles*,

My rucksack and my brogues with tackets on,

For I must find again that little dell
Where mulberries are ripe in Carcassonne.

Around those fields the hosts of CHARLEMAGNE

Swept battlewards with great Mount-joyous yell;

Horrid with swords that cleft through chap and chine

They rolled t'wards Spain the bastard Infidel.

Here many a great one of that peer-age fell.

Trench-diggers often turn a skeleton

With thighs and shinbones curved . . . the Franks rode well!

The mulberries are ripe in Carcassonne.

Envoi

BLACK PRINCE, to-day the hallowed acres swell

With fatness that your warriors died upon!

Blue-blooded, hot—you almost feel their smell. . .

THE MULBERRIES ARE RIPE IN CARCASSONNE!

Le Château (The Castle)

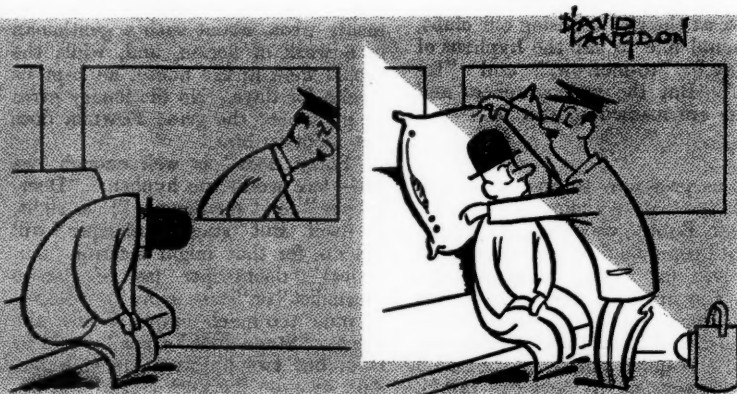
As fresh tourists arrived and asked to be shown round, an old lady in black satin pushed them into a bare room on the right of the hall, telling them to wait a few minutes for a guide.

Between twenty and thirty of us had gathered in the foolish whispering groups into which visitors to any large building coagulate if given half a chance, when the guide came in. He was young for the job, but in spite of dark glasses his face shone with intelligence, and his alpaca jacket and stout boots gave him an air of sombre but reassuring authority. For some seconds he gravely ran his eye over us.

Then he said, "Messieurs, Mesdames, you look tired. You look very tired, and I am not surprised. I know too well the signs of this particular fatigue. In the whole world there is only one exercise which can produce just such a creasing of the brow, such a hollowness of cheek, such an agonising seizure of the lower back and that exact form of sagging knee. It is inspecting our so-famous châteaux. For some years now I have been observing our visitors so closely that from the degree of their exhaustion I can tell at a glance to which châteaux they have been."

The party looked at each other with some astonishment at this unorthodox opening. But there was no doubt that the guide was perfectly right. We all looked fit to drop.

"You will forgive my solicitude, I



trust," he went on, "but I am a man of soft heart, and it makes me sad to think that a number of you here to-day who have paid three good francs and trudged nearly a kilometre uphill in the beating sun to visit this so-famous château may not be in a suitable condition to appreciate its many fascinating features. Although you may not look for such a warning from a guide, I think it only fair to tell you that ahead in this so-famous château lie nine-hundred-and-thirty metres of stone corridor, three-hundred-and-forty-two steps, all of stone and notorious even in Touraine for the steepness of their angle, seventy-three portraits, fifty-three pieces of statuary and one-hundred-and-ninety-nine miscellaneous objets d'art. In the circumstances it is only reasonable that some of you may wish to abandon the project of a detailed tour. This is the moment for doing so, Messieurs, Mesdames, before we go upstairs."

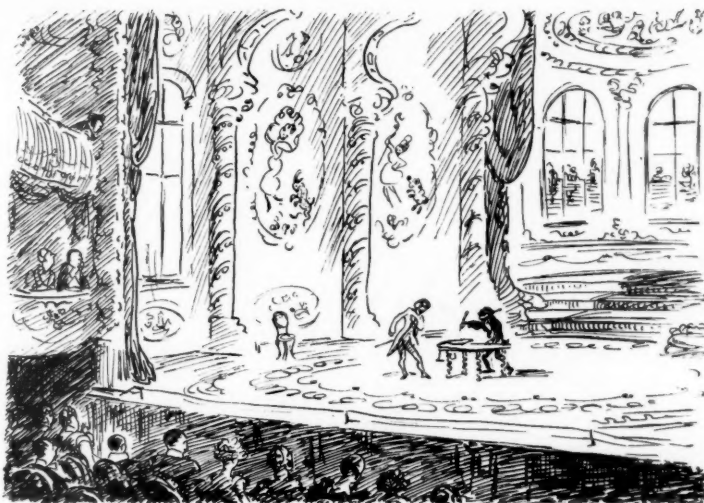
At his words, which were spoken with a kindness which robbed them of all impertinence, a heavy depression fell upon the party; but, thanking the guide for his good feeling, we told him we would carry on. The only ones who showed impatience were a man who looked like a schoolmaster and two flaxen girls at the back of the crowd. They told the guide bluntly that they had come to see the château and they would be obliged if he would show it to them without further loss of time.

"So be it," he said, leading us upstairs. His French was beautiful, and he spoke it as if he were a tragic actor warming to his part.

"This is the so-famous drawing-room in which for the first time Catherine de Medicis came upon Diane de Poitiers sitting on the knee of her husband, Henri the Second. It was on that couch in the corner that the scandal was enacted. In the annals of our so-famous château it is recorded that the King preserved his dignity by explaining that his friend had a fly in her eye, which he was doing his best to dig out."

"I didn't know Diane de Poitiers was ever here," the schoolmaster objected.

"Monsieur, there is no castle in all Touraine which at one time or another was not enriched by the somewhat voluptuous presence of that great lady. We have just been sent the advance proofs of a most interesting investigation carried out by three members of the Academy, which shows that in order to have made good the itinerary with which history has credited her she must have travelled an average of a hundred-and-seventeen kilometres every day of



"I'D SOONER LIVE IN ONE ROOM THAN SIGN THAT!"

her life, dined six times in the twelve hours, and slept in eight-point-two different beds every night. It was indeed a pity that time and space made it impossible for her and Elizabeth of England to join forces.

"Here," he continued, "is the Council Chamber, where François the First made his so-famous joke about blood being thicker than water, while over there you will see the deep indentation in the wall made by the head of the Bishop of Chartres, who asked why everyone was laughing." He waited a little, as a good artist should. "It is a room full of fragrant memories and happens to be absolutely square. Exactly one million cubic feet, Messieurs, Mesdames."

"Baedeker says nine-hundred-thousand-and-four," one of the flaxen girls observed sharply.

"Alas!" said the guide, smiling apologetically, "the day the delightful Doctor Baedeker was here we lent him the wrong measuring-tape. It was a blot on the record of our so-famous château which we had hoped was forgotten. You will now kindly follow me into the Smaller Banqueting-hall. This, Messieurs, Mesdames, is remarkable for its fine portrait of Ferdinand the Pretentious and for being the very room in which Catherine de Medicis presented the Abbé of Perros-Guirec with a purse of a thousand crowns for his so-famous discovery that shallots intensify the natural flavour of the mussel."

"This Ferdinand the Pretentious,"

grumbled the schoolmaster—"which was he? If you mean—"

"The husband of Hortense the Swarthy, of course," the guide said quickly, and led us on through the castle, pausing often to illuminate expertly its points of interest with the high-light of dramatic fact. By the time the tour was finished he had impressed himself most favourably on us all, apart from the schoolmaster, who was plainly a difficult fellow, and the two flaxen girls, of whom the party unanimously disapproved.

As we came down the long corridor into the hall we ran into another party starting out. Its guide asked who was in charge of us, and when we explained, looked puzzled.

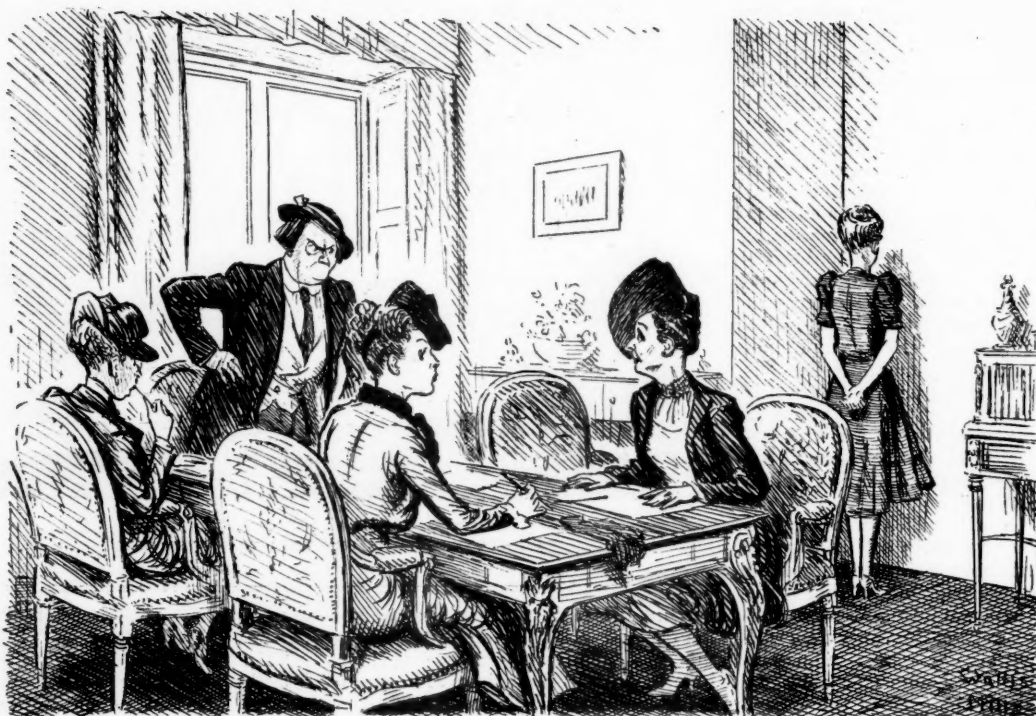
"Where is your guide?" he demanded sternly.

Nobody knew. Except me. Being the only one who happened to have stopped by a window for a last view of the lake, I saw him slip out by a side-door with an expression of triumph on his face to join the two flaxen girls, who were already in a big two-seater. One of them had got the engine humming for him, the other had opened her purse and was passing him what seemed an excessively large tip, even for such a considerate and well-read young man.

From where I was standing it looked very like a thousand francs. ERIC.

"CZECH OFFER TO SUDETENS."
Newspaper Placard.

R.D.?



"... AND, LADIES, KINDLY REMEMBER I'M CHAIRMAN."

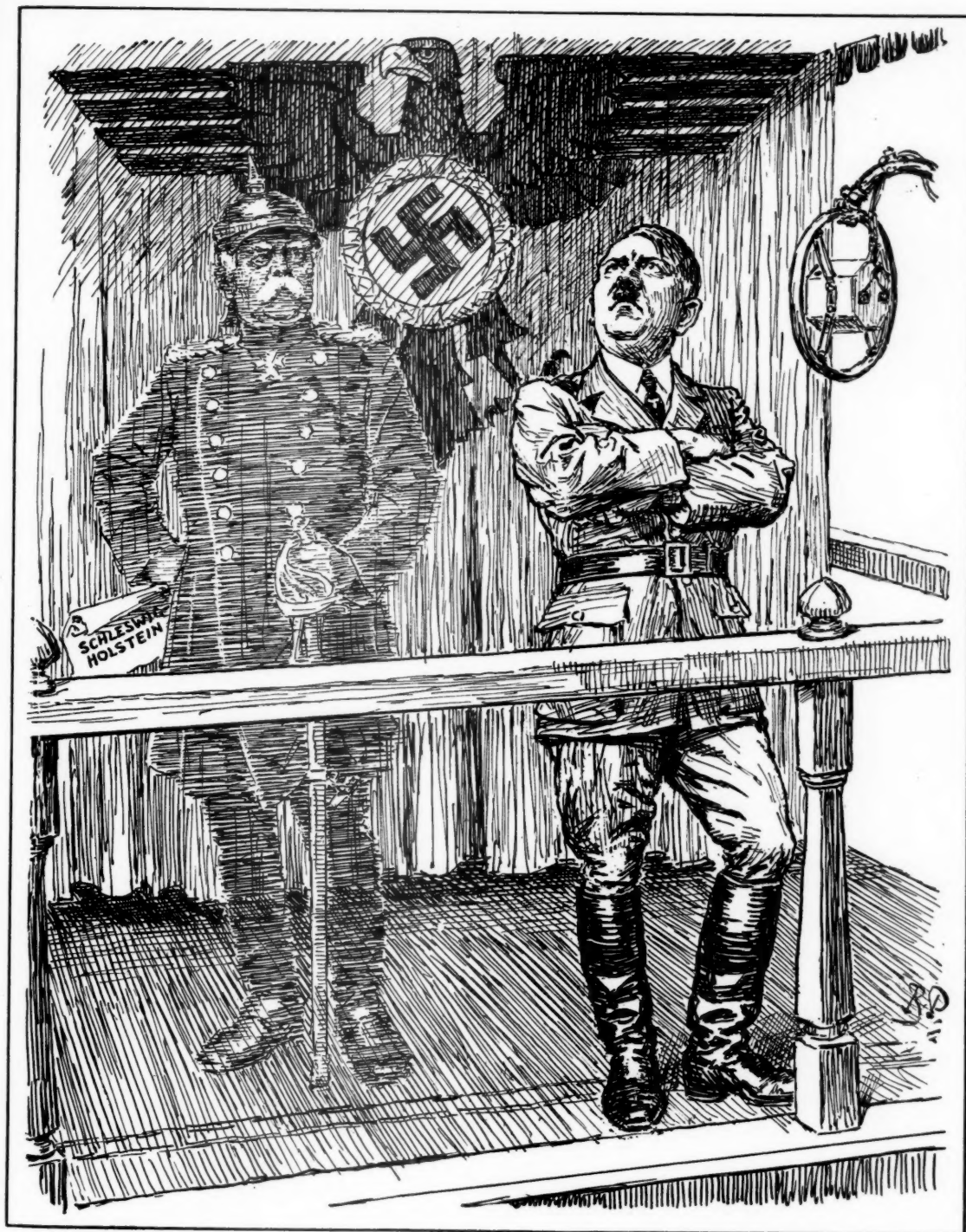
Ishmael

BREATHE it not in Gath or Rome,
Nor in restaurant or club;
Hush! lest sleeping gourmets foam
And waiters kill me with a snub.
Keep the news from Mr. Scott,
From women red in tooth and claw:
I don't like oysters.
WHAT! Don't like OYSTERS?
I don't like oysters
Cooked or raw.

Whitstable knows not my face,
Colchester my worthless name;
If I slept in either place
Dreams I'd have of nightmare
shame;
Angry fish with monstrous beards
Would leave their beds and jump on mine.
I don't like oysters.
WHAT! Don't like OYSTERS?
I don't like oysters—
Not my line.

Put me down as one debased,
One that spurns the symbol "r";
Every man to his distaste—
Mine remains bivalvular.
Not for me that succulence,
That gastronomic ecstasy.
I don't like oysters.
WHAT! Don't like OYSTERS?
I don't like oysters—
Pray for me!

Public dinners I refuse,
Horrified that if I let
My secret out I might be News—
Headline in the *Fish Debrett*.
Where the fans add up their "scores"
I seize my hat, I fly, I fly!
You don't like oysters?
What! Don't like OYSTERS?
Good God, man! OYSTERS?
I don't like oysters,
Let me die!



BLUFF AND IRON

The Old Chancellor. "Not my methods exactly, but you seem to have nearly the same success."

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Dream Houses

THE new chief of the B.B.C. has bought a Dream House in Surrey. An American millionaire wants to sell a Dream Castle in Wales. These startling facts are revealed in *The Daily Wire*, which is always perfectly accurate about Dream Houses.

I am going neither to buy nor sell my own Dream House, because, not to beat about the bush or put too fine a point on it, my Dream House is not yet built, though it has been revolving in my mind for years and getting smaller and smaller as it revolved.

My original Dream House was something on the lines of Chatsworth, only bigger. That was in the days when I still expected to be Editor of *The Times*, Prime Minister, Archbishop of Canterbury, and a persistent Cornerer of Wheat, Oil, Rubber and Cotton.

At the age of twenty-one, feeling that I had reached years of discretion and that the time had come to face facts, I decided to limit my ambitions and gave up all idea of being Archbishop of Canterbury, especially as I was told by candid friends that I should look peculiar in gaiters. Desiring therefore at twenty-one to be only Editor of *The Times*, Prime Minister, and a persistent Cornerer of Wheat, Oil, Rubber and Cotton, I found my ideas of a Dream House also diminishing, and I felt that Chatsworth, with perhaps a sun-lounge thrown out, would be quite large enough.

At the age of twenty-five I realised that in my youthful folly I had been too greedy with my ambitions, and decided to give up all idea of being Editor of *The Times*, particularly as candid friends pointed out that I seemed constitutionally incapable of spelling words of more than five syllables.

At thirty I also shelved the idea of being Prime Minister, because I felt that I should need all my time to corner really adequately Wheat, Oil, Rubber and Cotton, and also because candid friends pointed out that I neither fished nor bred pigs. At this stage I aimed at comfort rather than magnificence in my Dream House, and I visualised a streamlined mansion somewhere in Sussex with forty bedrooms with two bathrooms each—one for morning and one for evening.

In the years that followed my Dream House dwindled and dwindled, one bathroom after another being jettisoned as my chance of cornering Wheat, Oil, Rubber and Cotton seemed to grow more remote. A devastating

experience with United Suspenders (purchased at four-and-tenpence and sold at seven for sixpence) made me finally abandon the idea of playing the markets. But I did not abandon my Dream House.

My Dream House now consists of a single room built to my own specifications. The arms of six deep armchairs will each contain five ash-trays connected with suction-pipes to remove the ash as soon as it is deposited. Above the ceiling will be concealed a huge barrel of beer, with pipes hanging

down over each of the chairs so that one simply has to suck.

At the side of each chair will be one of the new press-button radios with an additional device for saving the trouble of pressing the buttons. So that I may be free from mental disturbance the newsagent will have orders to deliver *The Times* for 1838 instead of 1938. I shall abandon any idea of working until somebody invents a typewriter that thinks and whose knobs go up and down without human intervention, like a pianola.



"THIS AFTERNOON MR. MIDDLETON IS GOING TO TALK ABOUT THE CACTUS."

Nearly An All-Rounder

Down in Cornwall I stay at a place they call "The Farmhouse." I don't know why they call it a farmhouse, because, although there's electricity laid on and hot and cold in the bedrooms, they've nothing to do any farming with. Not only that, but they write the menus out in French, where the farmer's wife says she went to school, but the food's all right nevertheless, and so are the separate tables.

I'd had a nice week at one of these separate tables and was looking forward to another one when Miss Hock came.

The man who's supposed to be the farmer buttonholed me as I came in from the beach, so that I still had my golfstick with me.

"I want you to meet Miss Hock," he said.

"Pardon?" I said.

"Hock!" shouted the woman with him.

She wore a collar and tie and stared at you as if you ought to begin making excuses for something.

"Miss Hock will be sharing your table with you," said the farmer.

"I didn't know," I said.

"Well, I must be seeing to things," he said.

"Is this weather customary?" said Miss Hock.

"Well . . ." I said.

"What does one do here?" said Miss Hock.

"Different things," I said.

"What, for example?" said Miss Hock.

"For instance, I've just been to

Polporth and back in a hundred-and-eighty-one cracks," I said.

"What kind of cracks?" said Miss Hock.

"With this," I said. "Sort of golf, you know."

"Golf?" said Miss Hock. "You don't drive with that thing, do you?"

"It's six miles there and back," I said, "and with the same ball."

"Good Lord!" said Miss Hock.

"What's your handicap on a decent course?"

"Well——" I said.

"Or don't you golf really?" she said.

At lunch it was the same thing. Miss Hock knew everything. She could speak Esperanto and mix chemicals. Through breakfast round to dinner Miss Hock could play cricket, billiards, and netball, and swim like a fish. Further, she was a gold medallist at high diving. The only reason she was a Miss was because she had some sort of diploma for remaining like that. She didn't boast of these things. She just told you.

"Strange you have no serious games," said Miss Hock as soon as I'd started on my dinner. You could see she was wondering how I kept myself alive.

"The reason is, games don't interest me," I said. "I like something with a bit of risk to it."

"Risk?" said Miss Hock.

"Shooting and that sort of thing," I said—"that's what I like."

"Shooting what?" said Miss Hock.

"Birds?"

"None of that namby-pamby stuff," I said. "I mean big-game shooting, where your life's in your hands."

"I'm not familiar with that," said Miss Hock.

"It's wonderful," I said. "That and rough-riding are about the only two sports I can stick."

"You ride?" said Miss Hock.

"I love it," I said.

"So do I," said Miss Hock.

"There aren't any horses about here," I said.

"No horses?" said Miss Hock.

"Only cart-horses," I said.

"How unfortunate," said Miss Hock.

"Yes," I said, "but there it is."

After breakfast next morning I was surprised to see Miss Hock was wearing a pair of trousers.

"Off for the day?" I said.

"Put down that club and come with me," said Miss Hock.

"Where?" I said.

"There's something in this village of which you ought to know," said Miss Hock.

"I'll come with you," I said.

We went down the road and turned in an old farmyard.

"What's going on here?" I said.

"I have discovered some horses," said Miss Hock.

"Horses?" I said.

"Ponies, really," said Miss Hock, "but quite rideable."

A man came out of a cowshed.

"Saddled and waiting," he said.

"I don't know about ponies," I said, "and besides I've got no kit."

"You don't need kit here," said Miss Hock. "After all, this is a species of roughriding."

"It's not quite what I'm used to," I said. "I mean, ponies——"

"Get them out," said Miss Hock.

The man led out two absolutely full-grown horses. One was black and the other like Continental mustard.

"Are these the ponies?" I said.

"They'll give you a good ride," said the man.

Miss Hock swung up on the black horse like a jockey.

"Come along," she said.

"I'll follow you," I said.

The man stood holding the mustard horse's head.

"I suppose you'll want a deposit on these?" I said.

"We don't bother about that," said the man.

"H'm," I said, "no deposit, eh?"

"What's the matter?" shouted Miss Hock.

"Nothing," I said.

I seized the saddle and put my foot in the stirrup. The horse sidled off so that I had to hop after him on one leg. Then he sidled back again, which was even more awkward.

"She's apt to be lively till you're mounted," said the man.

"She?" I said. "Is she a mare?"



"WE'RE TRYING TO ATTRACT THE CUSTOM OF THE BIG BUSINESS MAN."

"She is that," said the man. "Now then."

"Oh, come on!" shouted Miss Hock.

"Here, give me a leg up," I said to the man. "I've had this trouble ever since the war."

As soon as she felt me in the saddle the mare walked quietly out of the yard.

"The beach, I think," said Miss Hock.

"Might as well be there as anywhere," I said.

Miss Hock did something to her horse and it trotted off. The mare started springing up and down on its feet.

"Whoa!" I said.

I was bouncing up and down so fast it was difficult to keep on, and it got us nowhere besides.

"Whoa there, lass!" I said. The horse took no notice but kept on with it, so I gave her a sharp reminder on the bridle.

At that she put her head down and started going round and round on the same spot.

"What are you doing?" shouted Miss Hock from the skyline.

"Just turning her round," I said.

"What for?" yelled Miss Hock.

"Go on," I said, "I'll catch you up."

Well, that mare turned out to be the worst horse in Cornwall. She wouldn't behave whatever you did.

After she'd got herself so tied up in a sandhill that I had to jump off, and then she wouldn't let me get on again, I said to myself, "Miss Hock or no Miss Hock, I've had enough of this."

I took hold of the mare's head and led her back to the farmyard.

"You're soon back," said the man.

"Yes," I said, "I don't like too much of it. And in confidence I'm not too fond of that horse."

Miss Hock and the black horse came bounding into the yard like the ones you see on the pictures.

"Where have you been?" said Miss Hock.

"I stuck to the towans," I said.

"Why didn't you come to the beach?" said Miss Hock.

"My horse wasn't happy down there," I said.

"Nonsense," said Miss Hock.

"Horses love the beach."

"Not my horse," I said. "She won't have it."

"Impossible," said Miss Hock, and leaped on the mare's back.

"Taking the mare, Miss?" said the man.

"I am," said Miss Hock.

"You won't get her down to the beach," I said.

"We'll see about that," said Miss Hock.



"I SAID I WANTED A BENT PIPE."

"OH! I THOUGHT THEY ALL WENT BENT."

A kind of neighing came from somewhere and the mare began jiggling.

"You won't do it, Miss Hock," I said.

Miss Hock turned round to say something and the mare darted inside the stable. The door was a bit too low for Miss Hock as well, but luckily she fell soft in the farmyard.

"There you are," I said to the farm man.

"Really one must be ambidextrous to like and yet dislike at the same time."

Really?
Straits Echo.

Old Joke

"POOLS AND THEIR CLIENTS.

"GET INTO TOUCH WITH YOUR MILKMAN."

Headings in "Daily Telegraph."

"BEDFORD TOWN SILVER PRIZE BAND.

Established 1893.

WINNERS OF NUMEROUS PRIZES INCLUDING THE CRYSTAL PALACE."

Band Programme.

We hope they had it insured.

"Mr. Gore-Browne knows his job, and his search for tim epast has just the right nostalgia of flavour."—*Daily Paper.*

Would that be a good thing to have?

At the Play

"THE LAST TRUMP" (DUKE OF YORK'S)

WITH the true dramatist's instinct for writing not only about what is interesting but about what is opportune, Dr. BRIDIE has built his new play on the tonic value of shock. "Life in death is better than death in life" is the text, and the play is a study of what happens to a man privately sentenced by the physicians when he is brought to believe that the whole world itself is going to end in a very few hours. This is a theme which could be played at different levels. When I saw it at Malvern in August it was not played with the same note of dominant comedy with which Sir SEYMOUR HICKS carried it along on the first night in London. The setting is reasonably serious, but it cannot subdue so vital and unresting a comic actor.

The play opens in a Scottish nursing-home, drawn with much exact and penetrating observation. One of the reasons why all Dr. BRIDIE's plays give us such good value is that he carves all his characters right round, and there is a range and balance in the figures of the Scottish financier, his family and the doctor's which make a lively composite scene. Although Mr. *Buchlyvie* (Sir SEYMOUR HICKS) is fatally ill, we are carefully shown that he is a singularly undeserving beast of prey. Sir Gregory Butt (Mr. CECIL TROUNCER), taking to himself all the privileges of age and eminence, delivers gruffly eloquent home-truths about *Buchlyvie* which go straight to the mark. This physician's tactics are to reassure the patient and to alarm his wife and family, because *Buchlyvie* must rest if, at the age of fifty, he is still to live a few years longer. His schemes for developing the Highlands have brought him into conflict with a curious coalition of a tragic old Highland chieftain, who is beautifully played by Mr. H. R. HIGNETT, and that chieftain's anomalous brother-in-law, Dr. *Schreiner* (Mr.

J. O. TWISS), a Jewish-American scientist of great distinction and equally great vindictiveness. When a shock or excitement will kill a man, astronomers may find their oppor-



NURSING HOME INDIGNITIES

Sir Gregory Butt . . . MR. CECIL TROUNCER
Buchlyvie . . . SIR SEYMOUR HICKS
 Nurse Pettigrew . . . MISS DAPHNE HEARD

tunity, and *Schreiner* thinks he has found his.



BEGINNERS' LUCK

Buchlyvie . . . SIR SEYMOUR HICKS
 Jean Macrae . . . MISS HAZEL TERRY

The dramatist tries to prepare our mind for the extreme credulity which the financier and many of his house-party in the Highlands show before

the *ipse dixit* of a scientist with a newspaper name. But by the time this, the heart of the play, is reached, Sir SEYMOUR HICKS has well accustomed us to find in *Buchlyvie* a figure primarily comic. Because we have met him first in bed in the nursing-home and have watched his grimacing alternations of confidence and alarm, have been with him through the gamut of experiences which await patients, whom he describes as being, in the eyes of medical science, "the lowest form of animate matter," we are not surprised to see him approach the crack of doom with a certain jauntiness.

It comes as a surprise to *Buchlyvie* that he should not want to spend the last night of the world's existence in orgies, and that he can find nothing better to do than to play poker; and, playing poker, he can with difficulty realise that the largest stakes may now safely be risked. But then he only gives a superficial assent to the news which, if true, carries him so far out of his depth. He is at home browbeating people and doing deals, and that is the level at which Sir SEYMOUR HICKS seems most at home in this part. He gets the worst of his deal with his daughter-in-law elect, Miss Jean Macrae (Miss HAZEL TERRY). Miss TERRY gives a very well-thought-out performance as an artist's daughter, genuinely fond of *Buchlyvie*'s son, Tom (Mr. SIMON LACK), but hating everything else about the *Buchlyvie* household and activities.

It is certainly not a very attractive ménage. Mrs. *Buchlyvie* (Miss MIGNON O'DOHERTY) is a woman who deserves to be *Buchlyvie*'s wife, and is looking forward to being his widow. She is a hippopotamus with the good-nature spread very thin over her ample form. Her hardness has for its foil the excellent vignette which Miss MARIE AULT gives of a clergyman's wife, who has learned by long experience of social intercourse to praise everything and to make the best of everything.

Miss PHYLLIS SHAND has a very attractive part as *Buchlyvie*'s sister,

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dependent in material circumstances perhaps, but magnificently independent in her views, finding everything that happens strictly in accordance with the Great Pyramid and the Apocalypse, and rubbing in her demonstrations in loud and sharp tones.

D. W.

"CAN WE TELL?" (NEW)

In other words, when we slip up on a banana-skin in Piccadilly Circus, is our collapse predestined and therefore part of a sinister (but rather childish) plot on the part of the powers that be, or is it the result of the exercise of freewill, which means that if we had bothered to keep one eye open for banana-skins we need never have slipped; or is it, as some choose to believe, simply that the cosmic coin which decides these things happens to have fallen on the wrong side for our comfort?

This is a theme ancient as the hills, but so dear to the heart of man that with a little fresh paint it can always be made attractive. At the end of his first scene Mr. ROBERT GORE-BROWNE declares, after a brief discussion, for the third theory, and goes on to a number of demonstrations of its effect in practice. Taking a motor-magnate's rise from small beginnings, he shows how again and again what seems sheer unpredictable luck picks his hero out of a jam and sets him once more on the golden path to a coronet and the Dunmow Flicht.

The story is quite amusingly told, but it falls into so many scenes, widely spaced in time, that we have constantly to be reintroduced to its people. Although the cast is good, the play leaves the impression that it is concerned only with minor characters. This is the usual danger of the episodic method. But there is a greater weakness here, and that is lack of variety, for it soon becomes evident that whatever foolishness, whether amorous or economic, the hero cares to encompass, the goddess of chance is determined to nip out of her landaulet and hurry to his rescue; and after that interest flags. There is something laborious in hitting

the same nail on the head seven times in one play, however truly; and this monotony of pattern goes unrefreshed by any further discussion of the point at issue.

It would have done *Tom Hollick* (Mr. JACK HAWKINS) a power of good if on one occasion at least the goddess had snapped up the window and told her chauffeur to drive on. In the first scene we see him, a famous manufacturer, apparently trapped on the Stock Exchange. Then we turn back. He is about to be born. The village doctor is drunk, things have got beyond the midwife and are going badly. Who

beauty coming to the wrong house. After making her his mistress *Hollick* is prevented from clearing out to Kenya with her by a leaky bicycle-pump which reminds him of the distance from which he and his wife have adventured splendidly together. And in the end his financial troubles are solved by the conclusion of an Anglo-American trade agreement. It is all rather too easy, even in a play.

Some of the scenes are neatly turned. There is little opportunity for any depth of acting; it goes without saying that Miss BEST and Mr. HAWKINS take such parts in their stride, though I think *Hollick* would be more effective if he were a shade quieter. As the ex-variety mother-in-law Miss NORAH HOWARD immensely brightens two scenes, but her make-up for old age needs drastic revision. Of the others, Miss BERYL MEASOR and Mr. MERVYN JOHNS are the best.

Full marks go to Miss MOLLY MCARTHUR for her village shop, so good that one half expected someone to lean over from the stalls and demand a quarter of all sorts and a pair of woollen combinations.

ERIC.



FLUTTER IN THE VILLAGE STORE

<i>Polly Gilpin</i>	MISS EDNA BEST
<i>Tom Hollick</i>	MR. JACK HAWKINS
<i>Mrs. Gilpin</i>	MISS NORAH HOWARD
<i>John Hollick</i>	MR. BERNARD MEREFIELD

should lose his way in the fog and come tapping on the cottage door but Queen Victoria's own gynæcologist? Later, he is about to be married off by his psalm-singing tyrant of a father to a village lass, and to dedicate his life to filling the village's paraffin-cans. Who should fall off a punctured tandem but a lovely young actress (Miss EDNA BEST), to plant love and ambition and lead him away? Rich on the proceeds of a bicycle-shop, he buys a house which turns out to be on the new London road and so the first of a chain of mighty garages. Become an industrialist, he looks like being beaten by a strike when the Great War arrives with its immediate settlement of labour problems. And so on. The *Hollicks* first snob-party is saved from devastating failure by a famous Society

Iritis

There was once a handsome attache

Who suffered so much from backache
That to lessen the pain
He decided, in vain,
To cut off his lovely moustache.

"If Hitler means . . . that unless there is a rapid settlement should be Germany will German conception of what such a settlement should be, Germany will march into Czecho-Slovakia, then he should understand the consequence."—*Evening Paper*.

That may be what he meant—we didn't read the speech more than once.

"TIPS FOR TRAVELLERS.

Don't wear new, tight shoes on hard-brimmed tight hats when travelling."

Malta Paper.

Now, why put the idea into our head?

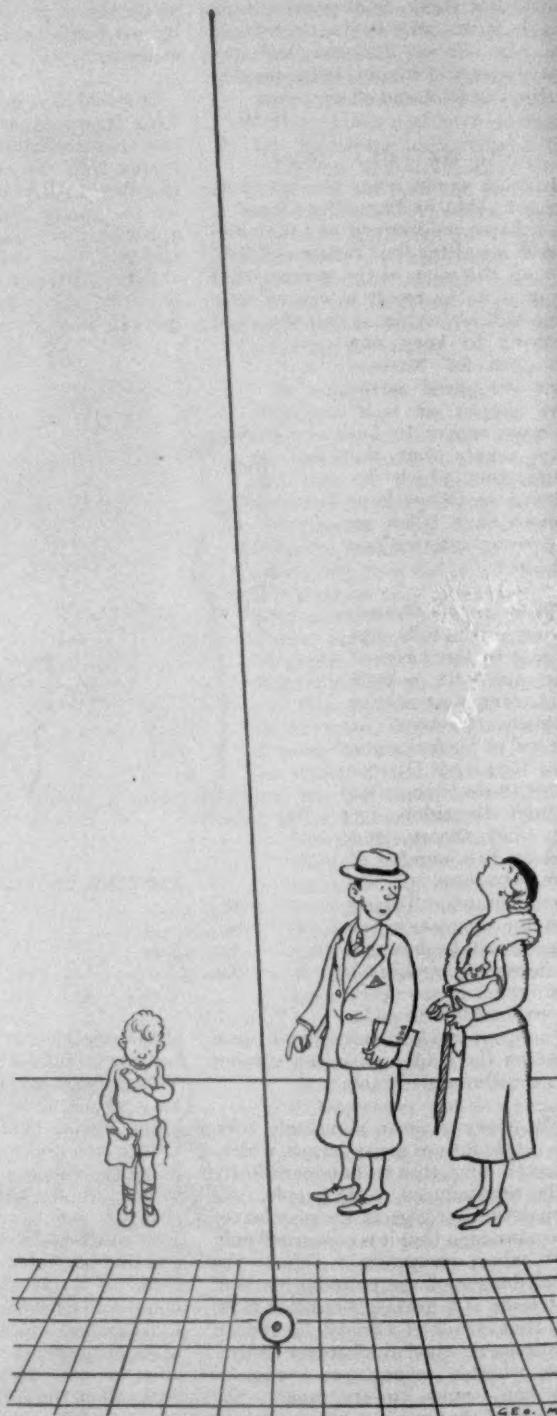
Bathing Pool

SHOUTS, yelps, echoes and half-echoes, splashings, floppings
and plunges,
Cries from the shoot and the shallows, the *tchuck ! tchuck !*
of the springboards,
A rhythmic tangle of voices and the raucous radio wailing;
Slim figures, grim figures, a restless excitement of swim-
figures
Dotting the arty blue-green of the zig-zagging opulent
Playpool.
Some prone in the sun's glare, stretched on the Pool's deck,
poured into stillness,
Others grouped on the terraces, lazing and gazing like
Roman spectators;
Tight suit and slack suit, white suit and black suit, suits of
all colours and patterns;
Skins pale as the moonlight, polished and taut as fine leather,
Coffee- and copper-coloured, proper and (bought at the
chemist's) improper coloured,
Town skin and brown skin, sun-baked and sun-flaked, pink
as a sunset;
And Legs, Legs, Legs—legs of all lengths and sizes and
contours,
Audacious and prim legs, gracious and gym-legs, bandy and
Gandhi,
Divers' legs—legs disappearing like fishes' tails into the
water,
Legs dangling and angling, running and leaping, sunning
and sleeping,
A frolic of Legs, legs of a Nation, speaking one language,
Lithely articulate, freed from the trammels of civilisation.

And now the high diver.
He climbs slowly the diving-tower,
up to the dizziest station of all—
surely the top of the world!
He stands erect,
a figure in bronze,
staring in front of him,
filling his lungs.
Heads tilt backward,
eyes casually envious
envelop his form.
The whistle blows.*
He moves to the platform edge,
pauses, prepares,
arms stretched in front of him,
king of the moment!
A hush falls.
He dives—
The water receives him gallantly,
almost without sound,
a ripple of clapping follows . . .

Then the clamour again, the seethe and surge of the Pool,
the shouting and splashing,
And beyond the deck-chaired colonnade, lined with non-
bathers,
The ocean bursts on the shingle, the big-hearted ocean,
Unchlorinated and free, smiling at proud Corporations
Who build sixty-thousand-pound pools with the sea at
their elbow.

*A whistle is blown to warn bathers to keep clear.



"... AND THIS IS A GEOCYCLIC PENDULUM WHICH DEMONSTRATES THE ROTATION OF THE EARTH ON ITS OWN AXIS."

Letters from a Gunner

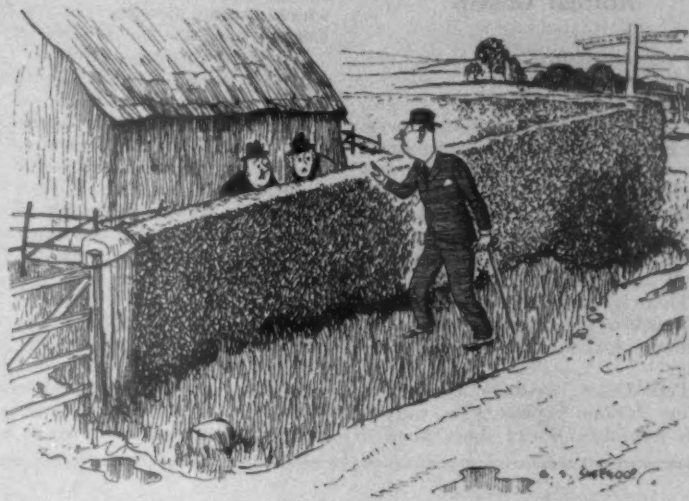
V.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—To continue my account of the Two Days' War. If they have anywhere a Programme of Events I am sure on the front-page it says, "Operations by courtesy of the Post Office Telephone Service." I have begun to realise what an organisation all this does involve. Two twisted pieces of wire, blue and yellow, leave our operations table and run along the ground to a temporary telephone-pole. From there they join others and lead to the Gun Operations Room, the Operations Room R.A.F. Headquarters at Uxbridge, the War Office and all the other gun stations between here and, I suppose, Hull. Believe it or not, we are even supplied with a form on which all private telephone messages must be entered. I have toyed with the idea of sending a jolly Greetings Telegram from the battlefield to Aunt Elizabeth, but I have my dignity here to think of. Besides, she would not care for flippancy in the face of danger.

But plenty of messages come in, some rather lost, like one half-an-hour ago: "Three aircraft flying north from Burnham are friendly not hostile." We are not really interested in planes flying north from Burnham, whatever their feelings. But it is rather thrilling to receive a message at say 3.4 A.M., originating at Margate at 3 A.M., that six hostile aircraft have crossed the coast flying west and to know that the message has started with the Observers Corps, been distributed round the control rooms at London and come back to us all within four minutes. And since the planes pass us six minutes after leaving Margate, speed is rather essential.

But the telephone has other uses. No more surprise visits from the General. A soft buzz from the phone and then "The General will be here within half an hour. Just tidy up a bit." It's all most convenient.

And the General did appear. Hither to my poor lay ideas on Generals have been two—General Blimp, snorting a little and living in a world of pipe-clay and polish; and, more soberly, Mr. Aubrey Smith fitted into something out of *Bengal Lancer*, with sun and dusty plains, the last chukka and "Damn it, the gatling's jammed again!" This General was very different. Tall, clean-shaven and very slight, he seemed hardly to speak, but when he did one had a startling glimpse of the complexity of it all. And that



"WE POPPED BEHIND HERE BECAUSE WE THOUGHT YOU WERE THE VICAR. ARABELLA SPILT HER COUGH-MIXTURE OVER A HASSOCK ON SUNDAY."

somewhere, somehow the rather dulleh lads in the Army Class had blossomed out into the organisers of all this. He had with him his attendant major; he reminded me of our physics master. "You put another little squiggle there and it alters the whole jolly outfit." You know the uneasy facetiousness of the expert who is trying to explain the simple base of his job to the uninitiated.

But the night was crowned for me with my struggle and defeat at the hands of the Army Palliase. (I am sure it has hands, or if it has not it has all the flexibility of a serpent.) In appearance and size it closely resembles a shroud designed for use among the Hottentots or Bantam Battalions. It has the stiffness of an hotel face-towel, and when filled with straw resembles a long tapering bolster. It can be defeated by lying on it flat on one's back and holding it rigidly in place with one's shoulder-blades; but that interferes with sleep. Attempt to lie on one's side and it gives a short diabolical chuckle and within three minutes it has given a smart wriggle to back or front and is lying placidly alongside one rubbing its straw into one's face or neck. It has perhaps two uses: as a bolster or as a draught-shield. Jammed along one's back it could, I think, serve some purpose.

But I did not care. When one returns to sleep at 6 A.M. one is indifferent to the antics of palliasses. I remember someone talking about

breakfast for a second or so, and I awoke at noon to find four pieces of marmaladed bread and most of Kent's wasps by my bedside. But it was dinner-time then, and so out into the heat of the summer afternoon fortified by stewed meat in enormous quantities and a suet-roll with syrup. Someone must have packed the winter menus by mistake.

But I am in London again now, feeling a little flat. We broke camp in the pouring rain, and waited a little dismally, wrapped in great-coats and waterproof sheets, for the Green Line coach to return us to civilisation. Then the Old Kent Road on a wet Sunday afternoon, a long hot bath and visit to the local flicks to frivol away four days' pay in one evening.

But at least I have a very much better idea of what we have to do and what we can do if . . . But it is not for us common or garden gunners to speculate on that kind of "if."

Your loving son,
HAROLD.

"Petroleum Still Cleaner Required for Persian Gulf."—*Adet. in "Daily Telegraph."*
This restless search for perfection . . .

"The new Karuzawa Kaikan was filled beyond capacity for its movie programs both Saturday and Sunday evenings, much to the surprise of the management."

The Japan Advertiser.

Even Professor EINSTEIN would have been a bit startled.

Animal Gossip

"I do not desire," said M. le Curé, who has recently acquired a wireless set, "to criticise an admirably English institution. Your announcers with their genteel phlegm and their elegant little coughs, your debaters so profoundly tranquil, your concertos of the promenade with their incredibly correct percussion—all command my respectful admiration. However, there is still something."

"There is always something," I said. "Upwards of two thousand secretaries, I believe, deal continually with something."

"Père Junot," resumed M. le Curé, "offers various explanations, ranging from reminiscences of the Crimea to

obscure jests of the English soldiery, all equally untruthful. The problem which intrigues me is the ubiquity of the English wind and the English horse."

"Both are unpleasant things," I admitted. "One bites and the other kicks, but not on the wireless."

"Whenever I listen to an English play," said M. le Curé, "I hear a wind of great magnitude. Its roaring drowns the diction of the players. When it does not roar it whines poignantly. There is also a horse, which is incapable of any motion but a superb gallop. Tell me, have you ever met such an animal?"

"I have not," I replied. "The only horses I knew galloped with great difficulty, and only when reviled by a competent non-commissioned officer. They trotted reluctantly, and even their walk was without enthusiasm."

"Precisely," said M. le Curé triumphantly. "Yet the horse of the B.B.C. springs from rest into a full gallop. What is the explanation?"

"There are two schools of thought in the matter," I replied. "One holds that Sir JOHN REITH said: 'Let there be a Wind Machine and a Galloping Horse!' and there were a Wind Machine and a Galloping Horse, which, like the wizard's bonnet in the fable, immediately began to function and could not be persuaded to stop. The other opinion is that he picked up a Wind Machine and a Galloping Horse cheap in the Caledonian Market—the Marché aux Puces, you know—and commanded that one should write plays to suit them."

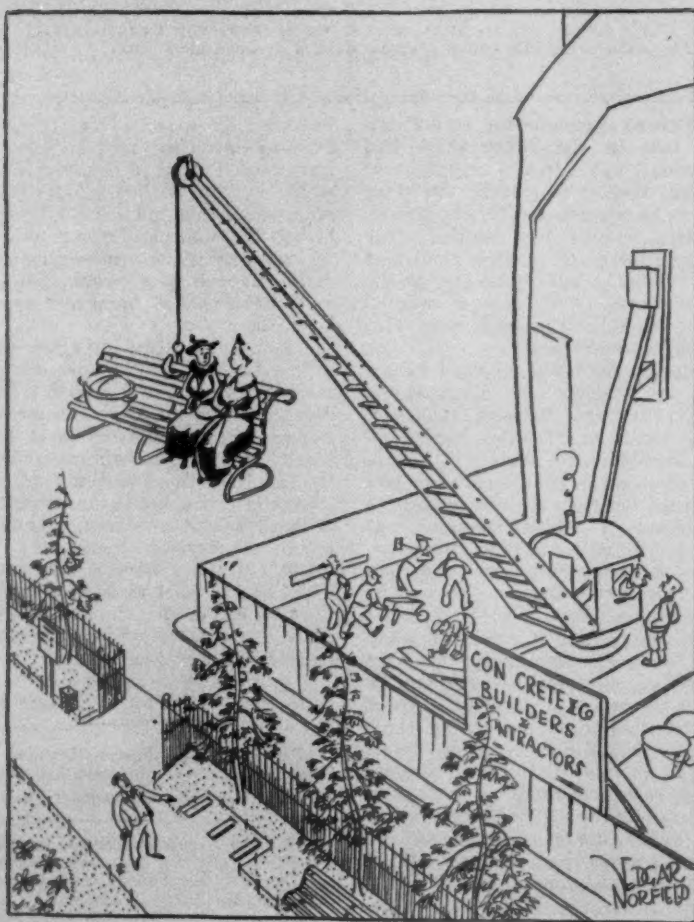
"In effect," agreed M. le Curé, "like the adorable M. Croumès of your Dickens, the man of the real pump and the splendid tubs."

"That is the idea," I said. "But there are other machines at the B.B.C. In the North we have an excellent Seagull Machine for use in dramas of the fishing village. When both Wind Machine and Seagull Machine are turned on together the effect is mournful and sinister, and one realises with dismay that the hero will be drowned at an early date. There is also a Sheep Machine for pastoral plays, particularly in Wales. The Welsh mutton, you know, is famous."

"But why," asked M. le Curé, "are such machines necessary? Are not the unities of the drama sufficient?"

"It is the English love of animals," I explained. "It expresses itself in the oddest of ways. Every village organist, for example, lives for the day when the lions will roar after their prey. The eyes of the choir-boys protrude with excitement as the moment approaches. The organ-blower awaits the verse with apprehension, for he knows he will perspire freely when the organist pulls out all the stops and treads on the pedals in a way that would have made the Psalmist think twice before mentioning lions. I have known a handle to come off in the blower's hands when the young lions sought their meat in C minor. At our cathedrals of course we keep bigger and better lions, generally in the north transept. One may see the public directing looks of awe, tempered with enjoyment, at the ccc pipe as the organist's transports approach their climax."

"I see," said M. le Curé meditatively. "Then the English love of animals accounts also for much in the English dance-music. That removes another problem of mine. I have often wondered why the English were so fond of tomcats. Now I know. In the English



"WELL, MRS. WICKSTEAD, I MUST BE MOVING ALONG SOON."



"VERY SORRY, SIR, THE MANAGER SAYS HE CAN'T TAKE A CHEQUE."
 "GOOD GRACIOUS! AND YOU CALL THIS A TRUST HOUSE."

dance-music I hear the miaow of amour, the long wail of feline frustration, the sudden squawk that suggests the impact of an angry man's boot and the swelling caterwaul terminating in an oath that seems to pass for a pleasantry among tomcats."

"A truly remarkable theory," I agreed admiringly. "One hears too the braying of the ass, the bellow of the bull, the yelp of the trodden-on dog, and the chatter of the ape. Truly we English must love animals, since we dance to the sound of their cries reproduced on saxophones and trombones."

"That would seem to be so," said M. le Curé. "But what, my friend, is the animal which your crooners strive to imitate? What malevolent beast gives vent to such evil howls?"

"Le bon Dieu," I said, "created many animals, but none, I am thankful to reflect, which could make those sounds. The singers live on an exclusive diet of green apples and unripe cucumbers, of which a large store is maintained by the B.B.C. One should pity their sufferings, not execrate them."

M. le Curé rubbed his chin. "Do you know," he said, "that is what Père

Junot said. For the first time in a long and wicked life that wretched creature has spoken the truth!" W. G.

Shame!

"CAPE TOWN (C.P.).—More than £20,000 (\$98,400) was bequeathed to the South African Society for Cruelty to Animals by Mrs. Maria Joan Smith who died at Wynberg, aged 75."—*Newfoundland Paper*.

"MAJESTIC EXPENDITURE CONSIDERATION BY THE TREASURY." Headings in "The Times."

With awe, but with approval.



"TWO PINTS OF MIDNIGHT OIL, PLEASE."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Jane Austen at Home

It is odd that so measured a genius as that of *Jane Austen* (GOLLANCZ, 15/-) should be a matter for partisanship; but the English novel is on the whole a romantic product and JANE is the most notable exception to the general rule. A straightforward Life, neither "patronising nor clinical," is her due; and Miss ELIZABETH JENKINS has produced an almost perfect period-piece, though its critical discursions leave something to be desired. The Janeites have nothing to grumble at. For them too JANE's is the highest type of creative genius, and detractors can be consigned to a common ignominy. Even the detractors, however, can take unimpaired pleasure in the family setting Miss JENKINS has so soundly provided for her heroine—the cautionary-story atmosphere of the AUSTEN daily round and the only too human exultations and agonies which its veneer of genteel decorum could disguise but never eliminate. It is a service to exhibit JANE as the fine flower of a witty tradition. After all, it was her great-uncle, a Master of Balliol, who, when a friend was desribed as having been "egged on" to matrimony, said, "Let us hope the yolk will sit lightly on him."

Poetry and Truth

It would have been a crying shame if the journals of DOROTHY WORDSWORTH, so enchanting and so sufficient as they stand, had been butchered to make a novelist's holiday. But Miss HELEN ASHTON, although a novelist, is no butcher. She is a delicate artist with a respect for her material and, while she has used the journals freely and largely to give substance and colour and atmosphere to the story which DOROTHY did not choose to tell, she has left their fragrant pages inviolate. More than that, after reading

her book one may return to them not only with no sense of desecration but with a fuller understanding. Miss ASHTON has imagined much but invented little. All her characters once had actual existence, whether as nameless leech-gatherers or as figures so famed as HAZLITT and LAMB. Her major assumption, with which few will quarrel, is that DOROTHY was in love with COLERIDGE; and to that thesis her reading of her heroine's reactions to the pathetically incompetent possessiveness of one SARA and the bright attraction of another is the logical corollary. Miss ASHTON's book indeed is compact of convincing deduction, the inference of the soul's quality from the body's habit. COLERIDGE is realised as a brilliant but dwindling meteor; WORDSWORTH as a duller but steadier flame; DOROTHY as a star, if of lesser magnitude, bright and constant. While *William and Dorothy* (COLLINS, 8/6) is a novel in form, it is in effect at once a poem and a memorable piece of creative biography.

More Medical Researches

Whether Mr. FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG's new book is really, as has been claimed, a counterblast to *The Citadel*, those who have read the latter may be left to judge. It is the story of a struggling G.P., told in retrospect. Dr. Bradley, taking a leaf out of *Mr. Chips'* book, sits warming his aged bones in front of the fire on the night of his retirement and lets his thoughts wander back over the long years of his life. It is not a very happy life. A rough father, a penurious disconsolate mother, a wife who dies in childbirth, a sullen son for whom he gives up a second love and who drugs himself to death with morphia—these are not the ingredients of a cheerful tale. In fact so inured to disaster does the reader become that it is a shock to find nothing worse than a bicycle-accident to Dr. Bradley himself in the last twenty or thirty pages. Mr. BRETT YOUNG's carefully-detailed descriptive style and his intimate knowledge of the places and people he writes about always lend his books a genuine solid interest, and Dr. Bradley Remembers (HEINEMANN, 8/6) gains added dramatic effect from the pro- and anti-LISTER struggle, which runs as a kind of secondary theme through the book. But it is not light fare.



"MOST UNFORTUNATE; I'VE BEEN DRIVING FOR TWENTY YEARS AND THIS IS MY FIRST ACCIDENT."

"AN ADMIRABLE RECORD, SIR. LET ME BE THE FIRST TO CONGRATULATE YOU."



ANGLING IN THE SERPENTINE.—SATURDAY, P.M.

Piscator No. 1. "HAD EVER A BITE, JIM?"

Piscator No. 2. "NOT YET—I ONLY COME HERE LAST WEDNESDAY!"

John Leech, September 27th, 1851.

War on the Door-Step

The historical novel is none the better for the loss of that cheerful irresponsibility towards the claims of history which renders stories in the SCOTT-DUMAS-STEVENSON tradition novels first and historical afterwards. With *Bugles Blow No More* (COLLINS, 8/6) the boot is on the other leg. Mr. CLIFFORD DOWDEY, a recent winner of the Guggenheim Prize for research, is naturally more interested in the actual *faits et gestes* of the War of Secession than in the characters he has invented to share them. The notable appeal of his book is bound up with its sustained apologetic for the South—an appeal reinforced by eloquent chapter-headings from the oratory and Press of both sides. His action is concentrated in Virginia, a state which, holding next to no slaves herself, was bidden by LINCOLN march to the suppression of her neighbours and gallantly joined forces with the South. The novel's hero and heroine are caught up in the defence of Richmond; but their fortunes are eccentric rather

than representative, and Mr. DOWDEY's future as a novelist strikes one as far less assured than the brilliant prospect his abilities indicate for the historian or historical biographer.

A Mixed Bag

You Were There (HUTCHINSON, 8/6) is a collection of sketches and short stories, with her own illustrations, by Miss SARAH BOWES-LYON, whose *Horsemanship As It Is To-Day* brightened Christmas a few years ago; most of it was done while she was still only sixteen, and it has so much solid promise in spite of much unevenness that one feels she would have been better advised to defer serious publication until her style in both writing and drawing was free of immaturities which should soon disappear. She ranges over an ambitious field for her subjects, not shirking the murder of a husband by the wife to whom he has refused a divorce, or a woman's visit to a forgotten lover, now a dipsomaniac in a Paris slum. Her work shows imagin-

ation and a keen sense of character. At present she is most at home in descriptions of the country, which she handles well. The illustrations are in white on black, and the best of them, of an old woman sitting on a seat, holds out the hope that Miss Bowes-Lyon's brush will keep pace with her pen.

Very Light Reading

Magilligan Strand (METHUEN, 7/6) should have come along a little earlier in the year. It would have been quite a good book for a holiday-maker to read on a sultry summer day, lying in a hammock, with a refreshing drink close at hand: for the long evenings of autumn and winter it is less suitable. The clever clergyman who writes under the name of GEORGE A. BIRMINGHAM is in danger of allowing his work to degenerate from light comedy into mere knock-about farce. His story this time is about the *Very Reverend the Dean of Barminster*, and his strange adventures while on a fishing holiday in Northern Ireland, where he becomes involved with a most remarkable gang of smugglers, including a young lady masquerading in the garb of a nun, who turns out in the end to be the lively and attractive daughter of his own verger. One does not quarrel with the general scheme of the plot or with the curious coincidences that bring the characters together, but in dialogue the author's touch seems here and there to have lost its cunning. *Mr. Septimus Hall*, for example, the well-known journalist who calls himself the *Irish Argus*, almost becomes a bore with his perpetual habit of visualising everything in paragraph headings. He is overdrawn, and so is *Mr. Gerald Billing*, the too officious Customs officer who is so keen on stopping the traffic in Irish Sweepstake tickets. This too farcical tale seems hardly up to the general high BIRMINGHAM level.

Who's Where?

Europe at Play (HEINEMANN, 12/6) is much too interesting a title for a work mainly devoted to trivial gossip about a group, known ambiguously as "International Society," which follows a conventional itinerary round the right places at the right times and makes no deeper contact with the countries it visits than to treat them as picturesque backgrounds, conveniently varied in climate, for luxury hotels of cosmopolitan standard. Reading this book one feels almost as if one were intruding on some large family and also, for it is liberally illustrated, on their private photograph album. Passages in it might well have come from "BEACHCOMBER" in his cruellest vein of parody, for its author, Mr. E. H. TATTERSALL, is strangely uncritical. He reports, for instance,

that to be accepted in the five-starred drawing-rooms of Rome it is first essential to be "socially O.K.ed" by an American princess; but even in this phenomenon he seems to find nothing funny. It is a pity, since he clearly knows his subject and in other directions displays a sense of humour; and when he touches on music, sport or gastronomy it is evident that he could write something much better. By far the most readable chapters here, though they are disappointingly slight, describe trout-fishing in Normandy and duck-shooting in the marshes of Spain.

Book-Stealers

Not without reason Messrs. HEINEMANN claim that *Fast Company* (7/6) is "a real find for the connoisseur of thrills and detection." Mr. MARCO PAGE's literary style may be too jumpy for sedate British tastes, and the pace of this story may leave some of his readers in a state of breathlessness; but he does, as they say, deliver the goods, and his delivery is prompt and extremely efficient. So often are followers of hectic fiction engaged upon a hunt after jewel-thieves, robbers of priceless official documents and so forth, that it is a relief to pursue the devious ways of those who do not hesitate to steal a first edition of *Don Quixote*. This story in its American setting must be noted by searchers after an exciting yarn.

Three Heads Are Better Than One

No longer concerning himself with European affairs, Mr. FRANCIS BEEDING finds his best form in *The Big Fish* (HODDER AND STOUTON, 7/6). The names and description of the chief character deserve a sentence to themselves. *Su Excelencia Don Belisario Garcia Fernandez y Torrelaguna*, Minister Plenipotentiary and Envoy Extraordinary of the Government of Peru. Unburdened by the weight of these honours, *Uncle Bel*, as the teller of this tale was privileged to call him, while taking the waters at Evian, found time to defeat a sanguinary rival in a race for gold. But *Don Belisario*, etc., had no walk-over, and a spirited contest gives Mr. BEEDING an opportunity to exercise his pleasant sense of humour and to introduce a considerable amount of novelty into a thrilling and well-told story.

All who wish to know the work done and the accommodation offered by the many hospitals of London will find this and much other valuable information about them in the fourth edition of *The Hospital Guide*, a most useful and important work of reference which costs only threepence.



"I'M TERRIBLY WORRIED ABOUT HIM, DOCTOR; HE'S LEARNED TO RUN BEFORE HE CAN WALK."

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Charivaria

A RETIRED acrobat has opened a public-house. He will naturally feel perfectly at home among the tumblers.

★ ★ ★

"We want to live as free Germans; we want liberty and work in our Fatherland; we want to go back to the Reich. May Gold bless us and our just struggle."—*Daily Paper*.

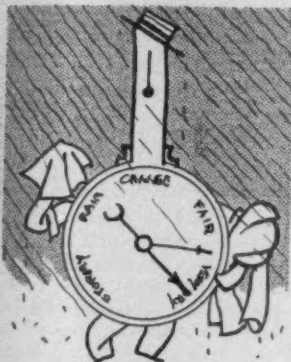
There's nothing like asking.

★ ★ ★

Nine out of ten people, according to a librarian, read the wrong sort of books. This is probably because nine out of ten novelists write them.

★ ★ ★

We read that an extending table, working on a new principle, remains absolutely rigid however much it is extended. The leaves in fact are guaranteed non-deciduous.



★ ★ ★

"Your December weather doesn't agree with me at all," complains a visitor from Australia. Our meteorologists have the same grievance.

★ ★ ★

A retired American sea-captain now plays a cinema organ. He never tires of going down with it.

★ ★ ★

Six Devonshire milkmaids are leaving for Hollywood next month. To appear in cowgirl films, we take it!

★ ★ ★

"There might be some relief for the taxpayer in the next Budget," declares an economist. "Might" is right.

★ ★ ★

Verb. Sap.

CABINET
MEETS
TWICE IN
24 HOURS

HINTS
FOR
TWO
MEETINGS

Adjacent Newscalls.

★ ★ ★

"Hungary Moves" runs a headline. So they also have misgivings about HITLER's scheme of expansion.

VOL. CXCV



suggests six months' training on a weekly paper. Another good way is to start as a radio comedian.

★ ★ ★

The captain of one Atlantic liner never smokes while he is at sea. But no doubt he has a whiff in every port.

★ ★ ★

A pigeon recently flew in at the window of a Whitehall office and then flew out again. It evidently couldn't find a vacant pigeon-hole.

★ ★ ★

In North London a man claims to have grown a potato bearing a distinct resemblance to a former Cabinet Minister. How strange that Nature didn't use the turnip as a medium for political portraiture!

★ ★ ★

A public speaker says that he wants his boys to grow up to be soldiers. Why shouldn't they take the same risks and be civilians like the rest of us?

★ ★ ★

"EVERY WOMAN HAS A FUR COAT MADE FOR HER PURSE."

Heading in "*Daily Express*."

We venture to bet that the moths don't get into that one.

★ ★ ★

One motorist's complaint is that he drives with the greatest care but nevertheless always seems to be getting bent wings. We wish him better luck in the far future.





"WHAT A PLEASURE IT IS, FREDDIE, TO 'ANDLE A BIT O' REAL CHIPPENDALE!"

Bath à la Polonaise

"So you are off to Poland?" said George. "You want to be exceedingly careful about bathing in Poland."

I replied that I had no intention of bathing in Poland and that bathing anyway was only bearable in the Mediterranean.

"I was not referring to the pastime of natation," replied George, "nor had I in mind the perils of sharks and currents. I alluded to bathing—barthing if you like—a simple everyday process undertaken in the cause of cleanliness and bodily and mental comfort."

I said that I knew what a bath was without requiring a detailed definition of it, and added that I supposed baths were a bit primitive in some parts of the Continent or Eastern Europe.

"They are not in the least primitive," answered George—"not in Poland, anyway. But they are dangerous. I only had one." George paused and continued—"I had travelled all night in a noisy stinking train from a place called, I believe, Cznswyk, and I

arrived about mid-day at civilisation in the shape of the city of Krasaw. Dog-tired, filthy dirty and disillusioned I drove to a palatial hotel and demanded a bath. 'A bath' was whispered in and out of the ears of an enormous staff of servants, from the page-boy to the manager. 'A bath? But of course. At once.'

"I went to my room, undressed and stood aimlessly in my dressing-gown, swinging a sponge-bag for, I should estimate, an hour-and-a-half. Finally there was a tap on the door. 'Monsieur's bath is prepared: will Monsieur follow?' Monsieur would. He followed the most tremendous retinue he had ever contemplated. At the head of the procession was the manager. Files Two, Three, Four and Five were, so far as I could see, stokers. Then came two maids, a chasseur or page, a man in a green-baize apron, another chasseur, a commissioner in sky-blue with a fur cap, a squint and seventeen decorations, and lastly the assistant manager. I tailed along in the rear. We proceeded at a ceremonial pace along the corridor—incidentally a Polish bathroom is not at the end of a Polish corridor—down a magnificent

flight of steps and into the lounge. The manager motioned to one of his acolytes to open the door and advanced in stately fashion, still at the head of his column, through what I soon perceived to be the dining-room—full. I followed gamely, however, along a strip of green velvet carpet, defiantly swinging my sponge-bag. There was dead silence. Every diner had put down his or her cutlery and was gaping at me.

"At the end of roughly two furlongs we reached a white door which, after an impressive pause, was flung open revealing the bathroom. The cortège ranged itself in two columns, one on each side of the doorway, and I passed majestically into the condemned cell.

"You could not in your wildest dreams conceive the grandeur of the place. The bath itself was of marble, sunk into the floor. The floor was of tiled mosaic, and the appointments were luxurious. Every imaginable type of chromium-plated pipe, bar, wheel, tap, spray, shower, jet, funnel and rail was there. Coils of white rubber hose, coils of red and black hose, things like colanders and sieves drooped from the ceiling. Towels were draped every-

where, and soaps, scents, salts, perfumes and unguents abounded. A bather's paradise. After rapt contemplation of this Elysium I disrobed—that's a good word and most suitable—and prodded a tentative foot into the water, but withdrew it very quickly. The water was red-hot. Obviously I must find the cold tap.

"It was at this point, I think, that I began to have doubts about this barbaric magnificence, and—it may have been the steam—I began to sweat a little. Of course none of the taps was marked HOT or COLD, not even in Polish, and I counted about forty-two, besides levers and a row of things like a Bentley's wheelbrace. Furtively I turned one. Nothing happened. As a matter of fact nothing happened after turning five. It was the same with the brass levers.

"The only incident of note was that the first Bentley wheelbrace engendered one—only one—drop of tepid water down my back, and this, I am now convinced, was due to condensation or whatever it is called from steam and dripped from a sort of trapeze over my head constructed of oxy-copper and Florentine bronze. At least I should think it was. I had been going gingerly up to now, because you never

know in a strange and elaborate bathroom when a small jet of ice-cold or scalding water may not leap out at you and take you in the pit of the stomach. But at this point a black fury overcame me. Snarling, I leapt at every gadget and fu-fu pipe in sight and turned it on. There must have been hundreds. I was now too high-flown with insolence to care if a jet from a fire-engine broke my backbone. But it didn't. After five minutes of violent energy the result was *nil*. Every tap, robinet, aperture, valve, bib, flange, vent, scupper and sea-cock was now open to permit the free passage of water without let or hindrance. But none came, and realisation dawned.

"*Running water was not laid on.* Just that. The four villainous stokers in my cavalcade had quite patently stoked up cauldrons in the bowels of the hotel for an hour-and-a-half and emptied them into the bath. There was nothing to do but wait. I am no scientist and have no idea how long it takes a large quantity of scalding water to cool, but it is a long time. I suppose with tentative toeings now and then I gave it fifteen minutes. It seemed at least four hours. My right leg could by now stand the heat about as far as the ankle, and then, I am

afraid, I was incautious. I was standing on the edge of this pool of the Sybarites clinging with both hands to a silver rail and testing the temperature with my leg immersed to a depth of, say, six inches. And it was still far too hot. Reluctantly I heaved my leg up, and then the rail broke. . . .

"The doctor whom they called in to attend to my burns doubtless intended to be most helpful, although I could not understand one word he said. He rubbed some ointment on my back and presented me with what appeared to be a book of Irish Sweepstake tickets but weren't, as I discovered when I was well enough to visit Thomas Cook's."

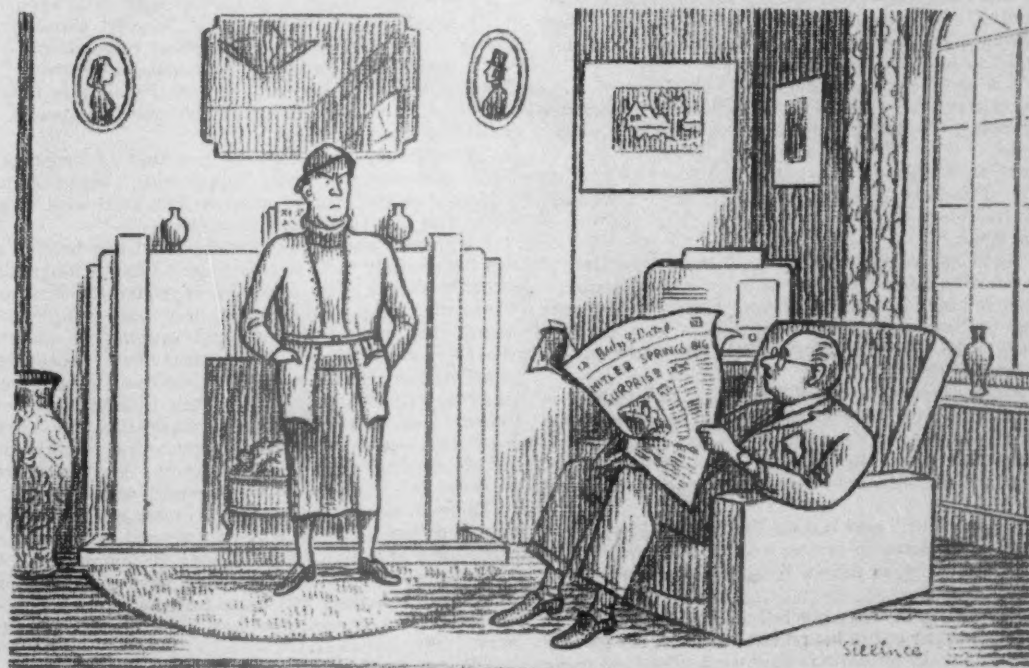
"What were they?" I asked.

"Twelve tickets at special discount rates which enabled me to enjoy the healing properties of the Krasaw Hot Spring Saline Baths. I still have them if you'd care for them. They say they're wonderful. No?"

"One of the highlights of the week was the grand Carnival parade on Thursday, which was judged by the Mayor and Mayoress of Lincoln and the Mayor and Mayoress of Scunthorpe, who were unable to be present."

Lincolnshire Paper.

It's always safest.



"I WOULDN'T GO ROUND SAYING 'SALAAM, HITLER!'"

Making the Best of It

You cannot keep asunder
The men of German blood.
This was the primal blunder—
Have you got that, Miss Mud?
The frontier was a fable
Fixed by a mountain-top,
Framed at a Council Table
Through ignorance. *Full stop.*

Justice alone was yielded
And everyone was right;
The sword that HITLER wielded
Was not the sword of Might.
The French and we were tender
And took the kindest course;
The Czechs did not surrender
To Fear nor yet to Force.

Time will assuage their trouble
And leave them proud in fact
Of being small—yet double
In strength because compact:
*Lord! I could write a column
Of tripe to this intent,
As smooth—as suave—as solemn—
If England gave up Kent.* EVOE.

Proceedings of the Sycamore Club

A Chat About Happiness

THERE was some more good talk up at the Sycamore the other evening. Thomas had been reading a book called *What is Happiness?* and it had made an impression on him. "You ought to read it," he said.

"Who's it by?" asked Wilson.

Thomas said it was by Havelock Ellis, Martin Armstrong, J. B. Priestley, Bertrand Russell, Gerald Bullett, John Hilton—

"Whoa!" said Wilson.

—V. S. Pritchett, Storm Jameson, Eric Linklater, Bertrand Russell—

"What, again?"

—and Sir Hugh Walpole. He said it was something, if we knew what he meant, in the nature of a symposium.

"What's it about?" asked Wilson, while Fawcett was explaining to Summers that a symposium is a kind of dining-club, with Plato or Boswell or somebody taking notes of the conversation.

"It's about Happiness," said Thomas, "as the title is supposed to indicate. Put more plainly, it's about the nature of Happiness, or what Happiness is. Each author has attempted to answer the question 'What is Happiness?' in the form of a short thesis or essay. And when I say essay I mean—"

"All right, all right," said Wilson huffily. "I know what an essay is. You have to try to work in a quotation. I used to get as many as fifteen or sixteen out of twenty for them at school."

"These people would have got full marks," said Thomas, pulling a bit of paper out of his pocket. "I took the trouble to make a note of the quotations they used. Between them they quoted Stevenson, Wordsworth, Keats, Coleridge, Gladstone, Hazlitt, Hardy, Flaubert, Pascal, Pope—"

"Adsum," said Wilfred Proudley, waking up suddenly. "Sorry, Thomas; I got carried away for a moment. I used to come after Pope—remember that little tick, Pope, Arthur!—at call-over."

"What call-over was that?" asked Peters. "The Victoria Club?"

Peters says the most bitter things sometimes. Wilson says it's a sort of inferiority complex, probably, because of his relations on his mother's side, and he can't help it. We all think this rather decent of Wilson.

"—Pope," went on Thomas remorselessly, "Blake, Frank Swinnerton, Samuel Butler, Santayana, Napoleon, George Eliot, Lucretius, Colette—"

"It Happened One Night," put in Wilfred Proudley, who seemed to be in a very queer state. We all looked at him a bit anxiously until his brother explained—

"He's thinking of Claudette Colbert, the poor sap."

"I'm always thinking of Claudette Colbert," said Wilfred dreamily. "Pass the beer, Summers."

"—and Goethe," said Thomas, folding up his paper. "That's the lot."

"Golly!" said Wilson, speaking, I think, for us all.

Fawcett took his pipe out of his mouth and frowned. "It seems to me," he said, "to be taking the bread out of the critics' mouths. How can anyone review a book on Happiness when all the quotations have been used up inside it? It's not cricket."

"They could use the same ones again," suggested Thomas.

"No one would know."

"Or they might just say what they thought of the book."

"Don't be silly, Summers," said Peters.

The Proudleys went out at this point for a game of billiards and the subject dropped for a time, until Fawcett, who had been brooding rather ominously in his corner, suddenly asked Thomas, "What did Goethe say about Happiness?"

"I think he said he'd had a fortnight of it altogether."

"I wonder where it was," said Fawcett pensively. "I had a good fortnight once myself—at Broadstairs."

"I don't think it was at Broadstairs, Fawcett," said Thomas gently. "Besides, I doubt if your idea of a good fortnight and Goethe's would be quite the same. He probably hated paddling."

"Broadstairs," said Fawcett in a kind of lingering way.

"I once knew a really happy man," began Summers. "He was an old retired gardener who lived with his plump little wife in a tiny Wiltshire cottage—"

"I know," interrupted Peters, "and she bustled about her housewifely tasks as happy as the day is long, while he toiled patiently in the little plot of ground he loved so well. So in the sweet companionship that only simple natures know they passed the tranquil evening of their lives. That's not happiness, it's contentment. Happiness is something keener, more ecstatic than that. Happiness is an extreme, and you can't have one extreme without the other. You can't experience the exaltation, the—well, the exaltation—that is real happiness unless you have also experienced the very depths of misery. You've got to have suffered as I have— Well, Fawcett, what is it?"

Fawcett was wriggling about in his chair and opening and shutting his mouth and in general exhibiting all the symptoms of a man who will have an apoplectic fit unless he says what he has to say, and says it pretty quickly. Now that the time had come he coughed, blew his nose violently and crossed his legs in a flamboyant sort of way.

"Il faut souffrir," he said, beaming round upon us all, "pour être—heureux!"

There was an awestruck silence.



THE PIED PIPER OF BERLIN



AT HOME

GENIUS

"Quick!" said somebody. "Fetch the Proudleys. Fawcett's made a *mot*."

When the Proudleys came in, rather annoyed at having their game interrupted, we made Fawcett give an encore.

"What's it mean?" asked Wilfred Proudley.

"It means 'One has to suffer in order to be happy.'"

"Rats!" said Arthur. "I only have to sink a four-yard putt to be as happy as a king."

"Let Fawcett put *that* into French," said his brother unkindly. After which the two of them marched back to the billiard-room, insolently swinging their cues.

"Stupid fools!" said Fawcett, much as Goethe or Pascal might have done.

H. F. E.

Ironsides

"'Fools blunder where angels fear to tread,' said Lieutenant-Colonel O. Walls, of the Salvation Army, when he opened his address to the New Plymouth Rotary Club recently. In this case the Rotary Club probably had a blundering fool in himself as speaker, but they had made sure that matters were right by inviting angels also. The last reference was to the two lady Salvationists who accompanied him, strongly constructed from galvanised iron, large size 7s., smaller 6s., delivered city and suburbs."—*New Zealand Paper*.

"One million Sheffield bread-knives, value 3/- each, yours for only 1/-."—*Advertisement*.

They must think we want to cut something.

No Hawkers Hardly

Why don't lovely Neapolitans,
Fresh from their vine-clad capes,
Make expeditions to Kensington High Street
And travel in grapes?

Why don't the dusky belles of Bali
Come to Balham in their betel suits
And barter bananas and figs and sultanas
And other mysterious fruits?

You never see lean brown lads from Cornwall
Selling their saffron from house to house,
Or gillies all hot from the cold wet Highlands
Trading in stolen grouse.

No one ever stops and buys one vodka
Or an Aryan sausage in a street;
No one ever met with an Empire builder
Yelling out "Wheat, fresh wheat!"

Why do you never find a real Rhode Islander
Peddling his nice red hen?
Why only Indians carrying carpets?
Why only onion men?

Letters to Officialdom

XXIII.—Re Fishing Rights

To the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, The Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Whitehall, London, S.W.1.

SIR,—Please let it be understood that I shall not tolerate any further delay in this matter. If negotiations between us break down I shall claim the fishing rights in question and so confront you with a *fait accompli*. I have repeatedly explained that I want these rights because the fish are suffering. I want to protect them. This stretch of the river forms the eastern boundary of my property and includes the only pool between Rumborough and Slow-on-the-Rum in which it is deep enough to bathe.

Not that this of course has anything to do with my desire to own the fishing rights. I want these rights because the pike, poor creatures, are being persecuted by the trout. During this summer I have seen whole shoals of trout bear down on several unsuspecting pike and peck them fiercely on the fins. There was a time, I quite admit, when this did not affect me in the least. But not so long ago, when standing on the bank and thinking how delightful it would be to have a bathe, the evident advantage of possessing these fishing rights was forcibly borne in upon me—the point being (let me make it quite clear) that if I owned the rights I thereby should possess this section of the river. That of course goes without saying, and that is really why I never thought it necessary until now to say it. In fact I only say it now because the colder weather is approaching and diminishing my eagerness to bathe.

Nevertheless the poor fish are still there to be protected, and whether the weather is cold or not, the usefulness of keeping a punt on the river for this purpose is not to be overlooked. Having a punt there will enable me to reach the opposite side without walking a mile round by the bridge. Also (I almost forgot to say) it will help me to protect the fish, because obviously I couldn't go wading into the river without frightening them.

Furthermore, there is a kingfisher's nest in the opposite bank which is only accessible from the river itself, and you know as well as I do what inveterate enmity exists between fish (especially pike) and kingfishers. Under their brilliant and beautiful plumage beats a vicious heart. Sometimes, when standing on the bank thinking how nice it would be to own the fishing rights

and be able to bathe in the river and keep a punt on it so as to protect the fish, I have thrown a stone at the kingfisher. So far it has evaded me and ceaselessly continues slaughtering fish. But if I owned the fishing rights I should be able to use a rifle against it.

This might, I apprehend, endanger anyone who might be in the field beyond. Because of this I think the owning of the fishing rights should carry with it ownership of all the opposite bank. This would not only enable me to protect the fish more easily, but would make it possible for me to fire down at the kingfisher from above, thereby reducing to a minimum the danger of a ricochet. Of course if I owned the field itself as well this would eliminate all possibility of an accident in the vicinity. In fact I may require this field, and later, possibly, adjoining fields, to be included in the fishing rights.

These matters are however for the present quite beside the point. All I want now is this stretch of the river in order to protect the poor pike. If you wish to know *how* I should protect them I need only say that, after segregating all the trout, I should always

keep the water as deep as possible by the construction of sluices above and below the stretch in question. This also would prevent me from ever running short of water—an advantage which, I must admit, *had* occurred to me before, though I thought it politic not to mention it because it would stop other people having any at all.

Besides, as my sole reason for desiring to possess the fishing rights is to protect the poor pike from the tormenting trout, it would only have fogged the issue before if I had mentioned also that possession of the rights would make it possible for me to (a) bathe in the river, (b) keep a punt on it, (c) kill kingfishers and every other living thing on it, (d) dam it, and, last but not least, (e) sell the poor fish themselves to the highest bidder if ever the need arose.

If you persist in your intransigent attitude I shall do these things anyway, but I should prefer our negotiations to succeed because I am at heart an honestly sincere disciple of pacific, patient and pellucid machinations.

Yours faithfully,

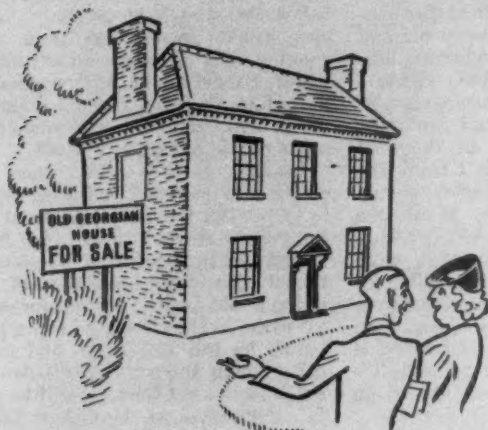
CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—I hope I make my meaning clear.



"H'M! THE THIRD LINE'S A BIT TRICKY."

The Roarer



Our Roarer is a simple soul, his heart is always bleeding;
He's kind to his old mother, he is fond of flowers and
reading;
But he has cowed the Continent, from Russia to the Riff,
By roaring into microphones and boring people stiff.

*Oh, rally round the Roarer!
Our Roarer beats the band;
We have a ruder Roarer
Than any other land!
He'll roar and rant and rage
Like something in a cage;
He rages, roars and rants,
And no one kicks his pants.
The world may sigh and stop its car,
But everybody has to hear,
And it's so very boring
That all the frantic nations say,
"Oh, let the Roarer have his way
And stop the Roarer roaring."*

By this original technique our Roarer licked the League;
The nations are defeated not by force but sheer fatigue.
Crude Wellingtons and Bonapartes went forth with sabres
drawn:

Our Roarer stayed at home and flattened Europe with a
yawn.



*Oh, rally round the Roarer!
Our Roarer beats the band.
We have a bigger borer
Than any other land.
The sacred foam that drips
From those prophetic lips
Is heard in every home
From Runnymede to Rome;
For this old Caxton spent his days,
For this Marconi tamed the rays,
And television's dawning,
That every thought our Roarer thinks
Should be conveyed to Czechs and Chinks
And cause a cosmic yawning.*

Our Roarer's moods are many, and sometimes, which is
odd,
He has depressing moments when he is not sure he's
God.

But this fantastic diffidence is conquered very soon
When he marches to the microphone and bellows at the
moon.



MODERNISATION

*Oh, rally round the Roarer!
Our Roarer beats the band;
We have a better borer
Than any other land.
Mankind from North to South
Puts its hand before its mouth;
If there's wireless in the stars
They are yawning up in Mars;
The signal flashes from the sun:
"Here's Public Nuisance Number One,"
And clouds at once obscure it;
While all the frantic nations say,
"Stop roaring—you shall have your way;
We simply can't endure it." A. P. H.*

Let's All Go A-Weltering

"CLARIONISTS of human welterings," said my philosophical friend Pinleaf, "are going to have a difficult job—"

I asked him to repeat the number and I would change the line. He responded: "Clarionists of human welterings. It's from *The Dynasts*. So far as I can make out it means epic poets. But 'O epic poets' makes only half a pentameter, whereas 'O clarionists of human welterings' is one all by itself."

"I think it ought to stay by itself," I said. "Framed in seaweed."

Pinleaf said that at least it got away from the ordinary routine phrases. "Anyway," he went on, "what I was going to say was that clarionists of human welterings are going to have a tough time when they come to deal with the present state of affairs."

"*Embarras de richesses?*" I said.

"Too many welterings," Pinleaf nodded, "most of them unsuited to clarioning of even the most muted kind. Sometimes, when I consider the countries of the world, I ask myself whether they ever weltered before as they are weltering now."

"Nevertheless I don't quite see," I said, having now had time to think, "why this should bother epic poets to any marked degree. I should have thought from their point of view the more welterings the better. They've only got to choose."

Pinleaf said that wasn't the point, the point was the *kind* of welterings; quality not quantity. "The duty of the epic poet," he went on, taking a little book out of his pocket, "is, it appears, to be noble at all costs. Noble, lofty, teaching dignified lessons. What chance—?"

"Who says that?"

"Dryden," Pinleaf said. "He told a lord so; it must be right. What chance, I repeat, has a poet to-day, with the material at his disposal?"

"What chance has the material at his disposal," I said, "with a poet to-day? Nobody will recognise it."

Pinleaf shook his head. "That's you all over—unable to resist a debating point, even though it's against your principles. . . . But," he said, with some difficulty pulling a rather larger book out of another pocket, "there seems to be some hope for you dilettante, hedonistic materialists; Mr.—"

"I refuse to be told all about Apathy again," I interjected in a warning tone.

"Apathy be blowed," said Pinleaf. "This is the new book by J. W. Dunne. Dunne by Faber."

I counted on my fingers. "It isn't seven years," I said. "There were seven years between *An Experiment With Time* and *The Serial Universe*. It's only four years. I should regard this with suspicion as a hasty outburst."

"This," said Pinleaf, opening *The New Immortality* with an air of proprietorship which Mr. Dunne, I know, would have found even more insufferable than I did, "is designed as a popular explanation of Serialism. It's in simple language, without mathematics. You, even, ought to be able to understand—"

"Leave me alone with it and perhaps I shall be," I said. But I saw by the look in Pinleaf's eye as he fluttered the pages that Mr. Dunne's lucid and incisive paragraphs were to suffer the blunting influences of predigestion before they reached me. I determined nevertheless to put up the usual fight, for what with the people who think of him as the man who spoils Mr. Priestley's plays, and the people



THIS MECHANICAL AGE

who believe his theory to have something to do with dreams, and the people like Pinleaf who explain it, Mr. Dunne seems to me to deserve all the help he can get from the conscientious.

"Look," I therefore said, "it seems to me that clarionists of human welterings are a more suitable topic of discussion at this hour of world crisis—"

"If more people had the sense," said Pinleaf, "to try to think on Dunne lines, there wouldn't ever be a crisis. And anyway, now I've set my shoulder to the—"

"Pardon me. You've set *my* shoulder to the wheel, and I don't shoulder wheels. My friends often chip me about it. They laughed," I declaimed, "when I set my shoulder to the wheel, and they kept on laughing, so I unset it again. Mere jealousy, of course."

"Let us get on," said Pinleaf. "He begins by trying to get into the heads of such people as you the point I've tried to explain to you before. Now, imagine a shoemaker's foot-rule—"

"Look here," I interrupted. "I may be incapable of grasping the inwardness of Serialism from the way you explain it, but my mind is unfortunately so constituted that I remember the illustrations. The first time it was a question of thinking about myself thinking about myself thinking. The second time it was the artist painting himself painting himself painting a picture. If this time it's going to be a shoe salesman measuring himself measuring himself measuring a foot—"

Pinleaf broke in to say that this fear of mine was groundless. "It's a slightly more subtle point than that," he said, "that you have to grasp. Here's a piece of wood. Here's your foot-rule. You regard both as equally real, don't you?"

"They're both imaginary," I objected. "You said—"

"I mean if they *were* here," said Pinleaf in some irritation, "you'd look on them as real."

I took a deep breath. "So that's it," I said. "I know the worst now. This time it's the shoemaker's imaginary foot-rule and the imaginary piece of wood, both of which are, remarkably enough, real all the time. Old boy, you put me in mind to go a-weltering. How about Downing Street, with everybody else?"

Pinleaf sighed "You'll never learn."
Nor will he.

R. M.

Familiar Occasions

"No, indeed, Miss Littlemug, it's not in the *least* tiresome—I'm so glad you asked. After all, what's the use of a car unless one can—"

"It's *more* than kind of you, and all I ask is that you shouldn't let me be the slightest trouble or consider me in any way. Just ignore me. Do all your little errands exactly as though I wasn't here at all. The only thing I—Dear, couldn't you just have slipped through between those two cars then? I dare say you couldn't. I only just wondered if it wouldn't have saved time, that's all. The traffic-lights are *against* you . . . I only just wondered if you'd noticed. The traffic seems to get worse and worse, doesn't it? Look, dear—was that the cleaners? Oh, never mind, you've passed it now. It doesn't *really* matter."

"I'm so sorry, Miss Littlemug; did you want to stop at the cleaners?"

"Never mind, dear, never mind. It's only that I just happened to have rather a large parcel to leave there. It's in the back of the car. It can perfectly well stay there—don't give it a thought. I ought really to have mentioned it sooner. Look, dear—here are some more traffic-lights. Against you *again*. I don't know if you could just shoot past while the yellow is—Oh, look, dear, there's a policeman. Perhaps you'd better *not* try. . . . There now! the green light is on again. Fancy! Anyway, you can go on again now. Dear, can you hear a squeak in the back of the car? It sounds to me like *either* one of the wheels, perhaps coming off, or else some piece of machinery, like a petrol-tank or something, working itself loose. Would that be possible, dear?"

"Well, I don't think it's terribly likely, Miss Littlemug, but I'll have a look round in the car-park. We're just there."

"Oh, are you parking *here*, dear?"

"Would you rather—?"

"No, no; don't think of that on any account. I only just wondered—but it doesn't matter."

"But would some other place suit you better?"

"No, no. If you *had* asked me—But really it makes very little difference."

"Would you rather we went to the other car-park?"

"Well, of course, dear, if you *did* it would save me a certain amount of walking, because the things I want to do happen to be all at that end of the town. But as I say, it *doesn't* matter.

I shall be able to manage, I feel sure."

"Miss Littlemug, of course we'll go to the other car-park. Do please get in again."

"No, dear, not an any account."

"Yes, really, please."

"No, no, I simply couldn't dream of it."

"Well, if you won't . . . But it would be quite easy."

"No, dear, you've stopped now, and here's the man coming for his sixpence. You must let me do this. Yes, I really do insist. I've got it all ready—at least if I can find it in my bag. . . . Dear, I've lost my bag. I'm *certain* it fell out of the car. That time you jolted going over the bridge—not that I blame you for one moment; it was an *absolutely* right thing to do, and I enjoyed it immensely—but I *do* think it probably jolted my bag out on to the—Quite right, dear, that's my bag. I must have been sitting on it. Wouldn't you have thought one would have *felt* it? Now you must let me—Oh dear, I wonder if the man would have change for a five-pound note? I remember now that the bank—You shouldn't have done that, dear; but I shall pay you back later. Now don't forget, I owe you sixpence."

"That's all right. Now, shall we meet here at—?"

"Dear, anything you like, but do you know, on thinking it over, I *do* feel it might be wiser to go to the other park. I wonder if the man would let

you have your sixpence back? I thought he had quite a kind face—didn't you?"

* * * * *

"I do hope you got everything done, Miss Littlemug?"

"Yes, dear, thank you, and I can't tell you what a help—Don't you sound the horn at a corner, dear? I felt certain you were going to run down that old man, somehow. I could hardly believe it when I saw him reach the pavement quite safely. I always think it would be so dreadful to run over a *dog*—don't you? Don't take any notice, dear, if I just lean over and look at the back seat—I want to see if all my parcels are there. Stop!"

"Miss Littlemug, I can't possibly stop here. What is it?"

"It's nothing, dear, it doesn't matter in the *very* least. Simply that I don't think those miserable people sent the parcel with my coat. It just *isn't* here."

"I'll draw up in a minute. . . . Now, are you quite sure?"

"Absolutely. It *isn't* here. Or is that it? No. Or is it? No. No, dear, it's not here. I told them the number of the car, and the time, and the place and everything. Unless of course I told them the *other* car-park. The one where we went to first."

"I see, Miss Littlemug. Do you think you did tell them the other car-park? Because, if so, we'd better turn back."

"Dear, I can't tell you how sorry I am. It's *not like* me to do a thing like that. Perhaps we'd better leave it alone. I dare say I can manage without a coat till next week. Look, dear, I think you could turn here. Shall I put out my hand? Oh, sorry, dear! I thought you were turning *that* way . . . Fancy! that poor cyclist looked quite startled—he nearly fell off. Well done! we're round now—no, not quite—Yes! But, really, don't you think we'd better leave it and go home? I do hate the thought of being a nuisance in any least little way . . ."

"It's all right, Miss Littlemug."

"Dear, you're always so kind. We must do another shopping expedition together soon, mustn't we?"

E. M. D.

Partings

PART with my cash? Why, yes, if you will.

PART with my heart? I'll try.

PART with my fame? I'm sorry, it's *nil*.

PART with my past? Not I!



SUNDAY NIGHT SUPPER.



"Isn't it peaceful?"

From a Café Table

WE were sitting outside the Café Weber at the top of the Rue Royale discussing vermouth and the Paris traffic.

"The way in which the Frenchman tackles the parking problem beats me," said Roland. "He doesn't solve it; he simply demolishes it with a blunt instrument. Look at that!" He waved a hand at the kerb in front of us, where cars were parked nose to tail in a solid line, while their owners shopped or sat in the cafés having one. "Try that with just one car for just five minutes in Piccadilly and see what happens to you! . . . And look at *that* fellow now!" he added, with almost a note of awe in his voice.

"*That* fellow" certainly was noticeable even for Paris, for he was just tacking himself on the end of the line where it finished at a side-turning into a courtyard. There wasn't room for his car, but it didn't worry him. He closed up as far as he could and just left the tail sticking out half across the turning. In London the mere hint of such an

intention would probably have brought about three policemen on the run. As it was, the *agent* controlling the traffic at the Madeleine crossing a few yards away took no notice whatever—though, to be fair, an *agent* controlling the traffic at the Madeleine crossing had better not take notice of anything else than the traffic he is controlling or he is likely to regain consciousness in hospital.

The driver, a short, fat, shiny young Parisian, then got out leisurely and strolled into a shop. His manner was carefree, even debonair: an English driver having just done what he had would have slunk off under a load of obvious guilt heavy enough to sink a battle cruiser. Roland and I could hardly believe our eyes. We ordered another drink and waited to see the thing out. Soon, we felt, another *agent* with less on his mind than the point-duty one would happen along and we should see sparks.

One soon came past, eyed the car casually—and moved on. Just not interested. We looked at one another in wild amazement.

The next thing to happen was that a large provision lorry appeared down

the half-blocked side-turning, coming from the back of the restaurant next-door. In England again an innate sense of justice would have led the driver either to stop and blow his horn continuously till he fetched the car-driver to move the car or a policeman to summons him for obstruction. The French, however, are more practical. He hesitated a moment, saw that he could just get past by driving half up on the pavement, and did so, nearly damaging a lamp-post and two pedestrians. Then, quite unperturbed, he passed into the traffic and was gone. All in the Paris day's work.

Soon after another *agent* appeared. He was a sergeant, and probably because of that had to take action. He stopped and studied the position of the car very carefully for some time. Then he went round to the road side and examined it from there, till he nearly got run over and had to nip quickly back. On the pavement again he looked at the car some more and then stared hard at our café, as though trying to spot the owner. We hummed a little air and looked frightfully innocent. Finally he went back, to the front of the car this time, and took out his notebook.

"It's a pinch," murmured Roland. "And his own darn fault for leaving it there."

After a moment or so at the front the sergeant went to the back—no doubt to see that the number was the same both ends. Then he got on the job in proper earnestness.

I have never seen a man go over a car more carefully or make more notes than that policeman did, and from an unfortunate experience some years ago in England I could guess what was up. He wasn't now going to issue a summons merely for obstruction as he might have done if the owner had been at hand to take the rap. He was passing the time till his return by going over the car with everything except a microscope—and personally I shouldn't have been surprised if he had produced a microscope—to see what other crimes he could unearth, from efficiency of brakes and validity of licence down to size of letters on number-plate.

Evidently my guess was right, for the sergeant, finishing at last with the outside, had now opened the door and was switching the lights on and off and pulling levers.

"He is making a day of it," said Roland. "Do you think he'll start up the engine?"

The words were barely out of his mouth before he did start up the engine and listened to it critically. Then he



"MY WORD! THAT WAS A NEAR THING."

switched it off, opened the bonnet and peered inside, making more notes.

"Number of the engine and carburettor," suggested Roland. "He's hoping to find that it's stolen."

Eventually the sergeant closed the bonnet and went round to the back again, where he was apparently trying to burgle the luggage-boot when the young man appeared.

I rather think we both expected the hand of the law to fall literally on his shoulder and to see him led off in handcuffs. Instead he had a short and affable conversation with the sergeant and eventually gave him a card.

"Graft!" whispered Roland. "He's the son of an ex-Premier."

The two had now shaken hands and the sergeant moved off. To our surprise the young man did nothing at all about his car—just left it where it was and came and sat at the table next us. We were consumed with curiosity. We wanted to know how many years he thought he'd get for it, how many charges had been preferred and even why he'd still left it there, for at that moment another diverted lorry was again scattering the pedestrians as it lumbered over the pavement out of the courtyard. The offer of a match got us into conversation.

"Oh, that policeman!" he said, as though he'd completely forgotten the incident. "He has a brother who owns a garage and who has just to-day told him he can purchase for him a certain second-hand car very cheap. As mine is of the same make he is naturally interested to examine it before he tells his brother to go ahead." A. A.

For Non-Golfers Only

As a decent honest liar the average golfer has the average fisherman beaten by yards.

Listen at the keyhole of any club locker-room and you will be astounded. There is no limit to what golfers will say. They lie about the length of their drives, about the number of strokes they went round in, about how low their handicaps were twenty years ago. If they have been putting badly they explain that they are suffering from a combined attack of malaria, gout, and Ingram's Itch; if they found their ball in a hoof-mark they are emphatic that a beetle, instructed by some demoniacal authority, kicked it there; they have even been known to maintain that the roaring sound made by butterflies several fields away has put them off shot after shot.

And when one has finished lying another leaps forward to take his

place. Golfer never contradicts golfer—there simply isn't time.

And they lie because it does them good.

After playing eighteen holes they totter from the last green into the club locker-room. Many are distraught. Some of them are really ill, their eyes protruding, their necks inflamed, their minds disordered—a few are even bent on suicide.

Then suddenly they begin to lie. It is instinctive—automatic. To one or two it is a matter of self-preservation.

In nearly every case, however, improved physical and mental reactions are immediate and as lie after

lie goes winging on its way so these golfers return step by step to normal. It is one of the psychological marvels of the age. Even the prospective suicides eventually begin to reflect that perhaps it might be better for them to postpone giving themselves the *coup de grâce* until to-morrow.

When no one can lie any more they all go home. A few malevolent ones to start their lying all over again, the majority to remark that on the whole they have had quite an enjoyable day. Astonishing though it may seem, this will be about the first truthful statement they have made for some little time.

G. C. N.



"YOU SEE, I'M A TRIFLE GAY! THE SHOT REALLY CALLS FOR SOMETHING IN BETWEEN A NO. 4 AND A 3½ IRON."



"DIDN'T YOU SEE THE NOTICE, MADAM?"

"OH, YES, THANKS AWFULLY—BUT IT'S QUITE ALL RIGHT; WE'VE PUT NEWSPAPERS ON IT."

Lines to Autumn

A Lament to be sung in any solicitor's office at the time of the reopening of the Courts.

Now come our dreams of summer to an end;
Now in the Courts once more must foes contend;
Now in our office, torn from various joys,
Engage once more the typists and the boys.

Once more the partners, in the morning grey,
Pick from the post fresh dolours for the day,
And managers in each accustomed seat
Press the pale knobs that bring the hurrying feet.

Now through the clients, red with rage and spleen,
Or sick with sallow envy's bloodless green,
Urgent to fill each folly-squandered purse
By making someone else's sufferings worse.

Rogues in whom avarice has turned to hate;
Ladies who seek discretion, but too late;
Sailors whose voyages left their wives too free;
An admiral who should have stayed at sea.

Here creep the agencies in fear and greed,
Mouthing and gibbering all their peevish need;

One raucous cry from all their disarray
Re-echoes "Oh, make haste! To-day! To-day!"

Now in the Strand once more the juniors run,
Their white wigs shining in the autumn sun,
While learned leaders, with more solemn gait,
Preserve their dignity by being late.

There sit the Judges on the Bench apart,
Wise in men's words but witless of man's heart;
There at the Bar the windy tales are told
In eloquence that only flows for gold.

Now the black ushers fasten every pane,
Unmoved through all the winter to remain,
Imprisoning with the hibernating flies
The exhalations of a thousand lies.

Fit palace for Beelzebub indeed!
Where such conditions match their Prince's need;

But how shall we, poor slaves of greed and gain,
Survive until the summer comes again?



LITTLE CZECH-RIDING-HOOD

"What sharp teeth you have, Grandmamma!"
 "All the better for peacefully revising treaties, my dear."



"JUST TWO SLICES OF LEMON AND A LITTLE BROWN BREAD—WE ALWAYS BRING OUR OWN OYSTERS."

Problem in Etiquette

"TELL me, dear, do you answer the telephone in strange houses?" said Cousin Maude in a preoccupied intent kind of way and addressing apparently everybody in the room.

It was evidently a provocative kind of question, because everybody in the room answered, although each answer unfortunately seemed to deal with some quite different aspect of the problem.

"In what way are the houses strange?" asked Uncle Egbert, rather like a detective.

And Aunt Emma, perhaps following the same line of thought, said that it was a great mistake to enter into conversation with strangers at all, particularly on a train-journey, and that to her certain knowledge many a murder had begun that way.

Poor Miss Flagge only remarked, and that very sadly, that her dear mother was quite wonderful still over the telephone, but couldn't bear anyone to ring her up on any account.

"I meant other people's telephones," Cousin Maude said. "Do you answer them?"

"No," said Charles. "Why should

I? I have quite enough to do without going round to other people's houses to answer their telephones."

Cousin Maude said that none of us had quite understood what she meant.

"I have," I said. "I've understood perfectly. Because I've often done the same thing myself. Somebody rings up and says Who am I, and I have to say I'm my secretary, because I don't at all want to say I'm myself or they ask me to go somewhere or do something."

"Dear," said Aunt Emma, "'Nothing can need a lie. The fault that needs one most grows two thereby.'"

"O what a tangled web we weave," added Laura blithely, "'When first we practise to deceive!' I've heard you weave the most frightfully tangled webs, getting all mixed up in your pronouns and things and promising to give yourself a message when you get in."

I said rather cynically that it was as nothing to the tangled webs I should weave if I once started telling the truth about my reactions to the things people ring up and ask me.

"Well, dear," said Cousin Maude, "I don't want to interrupt anybody, I'm sure, but I should like to get this straight. What about answering the telephone in strange—I mean in the houses of strange people?"

"People strange enough to be in asylums, do you mean?" Laura asked. "Or just nudist camps and places like that?"

"That will do, dear," said Aunt Emma.)

"Really, Maude, I do advise you to steer clear of anything of that kind," Uncle Egbert said, and he looked very much worried. "Let me tell you—"

So when Uncle Egbert had told her what a man who had made a walking-tour in the Black Forest two years ago had told him that a friend had told him, Cousin Maude began again; and it turned out that what she meant was: Did one answer the telephone when one was staying in a friend's house?

"No," said Charles. "Definitely."

"Yes," said Laura. "Definitely."

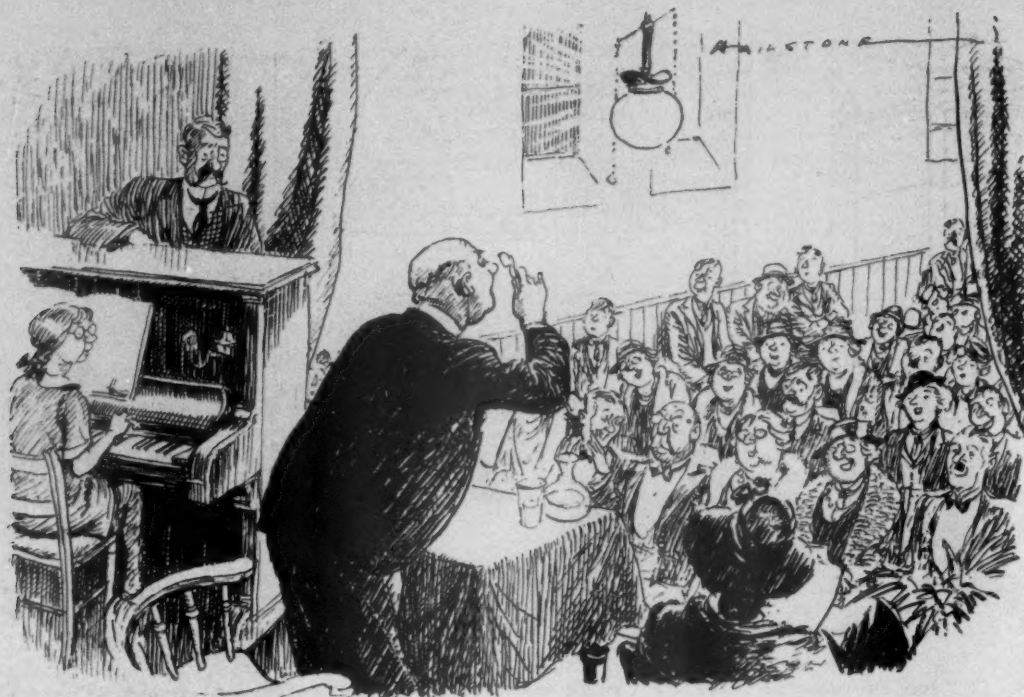
Poor Miss Flagge just said "Definitely" and nothing else.

Uncle Egbert, to my mind, was simply hedging when he asserted that such a thing had never happened to him.

"But if it *did*?" urged Cousin Maude.

"I should ring for the butler," said Uncle Egbert with spirit. (He ignored Laura's plea: "Oh, why not the third footman?")

"I couldn't possibly do that," said Cousin Maude quite positively. "But I



"AND NOW COMES A LITTLE PIECE FOR THE PIANO BY OUR OLD FRIEND MOZART."

must say I've often wondered. Take Molly, for instance, with whom I shall be staying next week. Hers is a very small household."

"Say you don't mind camping out in the garden," suggested Charles, looking out at the pouring rain.

"Say you *love* cooking."

"Say you'd really *rather* not have early-morning tea, and that you *prefer* to make your own bed."

Cousin Maude disregarded all these admirable hints for one visiting a small household.

"Supposing the maid was upstairs and Molly was out?"

"It's much more likely to be the other way on," Laura said.

"I might be alone in the room," pursued Cousin Maude. "And *then* what do I do?"

Aunt Emma murmured something not very constructive about Satan finding some mischief still, and poor Miss Flaggie said that when left alone in any room her instinct was always to look under the furniture.

Cousin Maude—rightly, I think—disregarded them both. "Ought I or ought I not to answer the telephone?" she said. "Once and for all."

I pointed out that she couldn't be

certain that it would be once and for all, and that, in fact, judging from my experience of telephones, it wasn't at all likely that it would be.

"I mean," Cousin Maude said in offensively patient tones, "that I want a ruling on the point. Does one or does one not?"

An extraordinarily long and interesting debate followed. The Ayes had it in the end, owing to Aunt Emma, who said that Uncle Egbert could have her vote as it was time to dress for dinner.

"We shall think of you, Cousin Maude," said Laura affectionately, "springing up at all hours to answer your friend's telephone."

"Oh," said Cousin Maude, "Molly as a matter of fact hasn't got a telephone. But I just wanted to know what the etiquette was." E. M. D.

Mark My Words!

At first I was decidedly gratified. I had wandered into the lending-library, glanced round to make sure the girl at the exchange-counter wasn't watching me, and taken out of the shelves my own book, *Central African*

Memories (Kortch, 15/-). And on the page at which I opened it the word "M'bona" had been underlined and in the margin opposite had been written in pencil "M'boona?"

As I say, just for the moment it gave me a little thrill. It was the first proof I had received that people were actually reading my memories—although I may mention *The Chiplington Argus* said it was "admirably illustrated," and *The Stockend Times* declared that it was "unquestionably the best-informed and most distinguished book of African reminiscences we have yet had the pleasure of reading." By a curious coincidence I live at Stockend.

But pleasure turned to annoyance. It was a bit thick, I thought, for my public to question my omniscience. True, M'bona is sometimes spelt with a double-o, but it is largely a matter of taste. I looked at a few more pages. My reader had obviously had a ready pencil and the scribbling itch. A rather humorous anecdote about the B'jana tribe had been crossed out, with the austere comment, "Nonsense!—The B'jana don't eat plantains." I did not like that at all. It quite spoilt the point of my story. I felt in my pocket to see if I had an india-rubber on me,

but just then the girl came across and asked me what book I was looking for. So I let it go.

The thing vexed me, though. I will admit that some of the emendations had been helpful. I made a note of one or two of them. According to the last statement from my publishers, allowing for the 183 copies sold at fifteen shillings, the 7 for export at six-and-two-pence-halfpenny, and the 93 gratis and introductory copies, only 1,227 copies remained in stock, and I thought it would be well to be prepared to revise the almost inevitable second edition. Nevertheless my chief feeling was one of mortification that I had allowed an occasional trifling error to creep in.

I looked into the library again a few days later and chanced to pick my book up. It usually happened to be in. It had been out in the meanwhile, though. A blue indelible pencil had found a lot of things the lead pencil had overlooked, including a split infinitive. This I considered a niggling criticism. The mistake obviously arose from a printers' error. I hope I am too polished a writer to ever split an infinitive. The indelible pencil also took exception to my use of the expression "a herd of okapi"—my critic preferred the native term "kaan" for "herd."

A week later I found that a fountain-pen had joined in. There was practically a run on my book. The fountain-pen had some hard things to say about a few of the dates I had quoted, and also revealed one or two trifling inaccuracies in my rather poetic description of a flamingo-pool at sunset; but I forgave him much because he sided with me on the herd-of-okapi question. "Kaan," held the fountain-pen, was applicable only to eland.

After that, controversy remained stationary for several weeks. Nobody very much seemed to be reading my book—although of course I cannot speak for the people who had bought private copies of their own. I picked the book up whenever I was in and gave it a surreptitious dust. Then it went out three times in the short space of a month—four times, if you count the lady who took it as far as the counter before she noticed that it was not the work of Mr. CHERRY KEARTON. The reading-matter swelled a lot during that month. I calculated that there were now sufficient additions to warrant the second edition being brought out in two volumes. All the later matter, however, was adduced to prove how misinformed the original matter was. It occurred to me that it would all have been more helpful if I could have got hold of my readers

before the thing went to press and enlisted their assistance as proof-readers.

After that month popular interest died down completely. Maybe there wasn't enough room left in the margins for anybody else to read it. It is now one of the oldest inhabitants of the shelves. The last amendment was appended some time ago. It was added to the title-page, which originally ran "Central African Memories, by Henry Keston." If anybody ever picks that book up now they will see that they are going to read "Central African Memories, by Henry Keston and Co."

I wrote the addition in myself. It seemed to me the least acknowledgment I could make. Anyhow, it was my book; I didn't see why I shouldn't have the last word in it.

A Pretty Sight

"When anyone else is present foreign journalists are frequently asked for their opinion and given in return information which would make the ears of Government officials stand on end if it reached them."

Scottish Paper.

"Past and present members of the church presented him with a revolving study, reception chair and cheque."—*Bristol Paper.*

Now he can sit at home and spin.

"Then, as to-day, Olivia read all the books she could lay hands on. She pushed through 'Ivanhoe,' wondering why a 'Bar-tender' (her interpretation of the title of Sir Walter Scott, Bard) could write so ably."

Film Magazine.

Not to be confused with the Baronet of Avon.



"HEAR'S DE OLE CHART OF THE CHANNEL WE'VE JUS' BIN THROUGH, CAPTIN. IT WAS IN DIS POCKET ALL DE TIME."

At the Play

"PAPRIKA" (HIS MAJESTY'S)

THE programme of *Paprika* has four whole pages of characters, another page for musicians, a page of scenery, a page of musical numbers, and many pages with photographs and descriptions of some of the cast. It is typical of the show and of Mr. ERIC MASCHWITZ, whose great quality and besetting sin is this love of profusion.

Paprika is a dish into which everything has been heaped, and the effects crowd upon each other and get in each other's way. There is so much to look at that the eye grows tired and anxious for short spaces of quiet, like the "bursts of silence" which came to adorn MACAULAY's conversation. There is a sustained tempo of breathless action in the First and Third Acts, as though to compensate for placing them in the upper-class London society of the 1880's. There is humour as a running accompaniment, and it is in his humour that Mr. MASCHWITZ is least selective and most easily pleased. He never gets tired of the humour of collision. He has indeed many of the gifts which would make a great builder of pantomimes. What he does not allow for is the failure of his different ingredients to combine. *Paprika* is in the prevalent bad tradition of thinking the story so unimportant to a spectacular show that no one on the stage need even seem to believe in it. He does not seem to me to have allowed enough weight, in the great and deserved success of *Balalaika*, for the excellence of the contrasts which a revolutionary theme offered, so that all the time, in addition to other forms of pleasure, we were interested by what was taking place. For the truth is that *Paprika* does not become interesting till almost the close of the Second Act, when the Hungarian Count strikes the young Englishman, and we know a duel must result. We are shown the duel. The production does not commit the arch sin of arousing dramatic

expectation only to cheat it, but it hurries over the scene and makes very little of it.

The scenes in London culminate in an entertaining reproduction of Charing

the scene is also meant to carry the climax of the love-story.

The Second Act is very much the best because it enables a wide range of Hungarian singing and dancing to arise naturally out of the setting, and very good it is. The heroine, *Rozsi* (Miss BARBARA BORY), is at her best in this Act, and this Act has the villain of the piece, *Count Ferenc*, who is played by Mr. AUSTIN TREVOR with great decision and force. For a few minutes we get away from that atmosphere of swift unreality which has prevented us from caring about the match-making in the First Act—match-making which is dominated by a tyrannical grand lady who stumps about the stage with her stick like a pantomime witch. *Jarvis*, the young butler (Mr. TONY SYMPSON), would also be more at home in pantomime business, where he would be very good. Mr. ANTONY EUSTREL, as *Michael Herriot*, who is the hero in as far as there is a hero, does not get very much opportunity to do more than express love with his eyes, and it is not a love which ever looks like running smoothly, even



INTERVENTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE

<i>Rozsi</i>	MISS BARBARA BORY
<i>Michael Herriot</i>	MR. ANTONY EUSTREL
<i>Count Ferenc</i>	MR. AUSTIN TREVOR

Cross terminus of fifty years ago, with plenty of bustle. All the travellers are in varying degrees slapstick figures, which is all very well, except that

in Budapest.

There were moments in *Paprika* when I felt how greatly Mr. MASCHWITZ would enjoy himself and how many good effects he would obtain if he boldly set out and based a musical show on one of DICKENS' novels. He produces, for instance, *Bolvary* (Mr. BRUCE WINSTON), an admirable Dickensian character, an old rascal who sells applause and hisses by his claque in the theatre. But in the interests of speeding up and the panorama all these characters come and go too quickly, and we are left with a sensation that Hungary is indeed a most picturesque and colourful and attractive part of the world, if you choose the right days and places, and that with skilful grouping nothing shows colour to better advantage than peasant dances. But these high spots would stand out all the better if an over-rich evening was given its quiet moments—if there were more occasions when there were fewer people, and they less restless, on the stage. D. W.



GOING THE PACE

<i>Julika</i>	MISS BETTY WARREN
<i>Jarvis</i>	MR. TONY SYMPSON

"DEAR OCTOPUS" (QUEEN'S)

Miss DODIE SMITH is an accomplished hand at the game of Happy Families, or rather Fairly Happy Families. She is also a shrewd observer of the domestic scene. I never go to a play of hers without being struck half-a-dozen times by her gift for picking out the small but extraordinarily significant incidents of life-about-the-house which colour a great deal of our behaviour. This particular game is played with a large pack, so that, while the picture is broad and amusing, the story hasn't time to run very deep; one is left wondering about some members of the *Randolph* clan. The pack is shuffled in a way which emphasises the sentimental side of their relationships, but the background is a golden wedding, at which four generations are present, and at such a time it may be held that the past deserves a reasonable coating of the finest sugar.

There had earlier been a pioneer *Randolph* who had built himself a country house in Essex, where his descendants are still living in reduced state but comfortably off. *Charles* (Mr. LEON QUARTERMAINE) is celebrating fifty happy years with *Dora* (DAME MARIE TEMPEST), the lovely mollusc of the title, a lady full of sparkle but incapable of letting anyone near her rest a moment. *Charles* has been running errands for her most of his life, but he is an amiable nonentity with no regrets.

Four of their six children are alive. *Nicholas* (Mr. JOHN GIELGUD) is a pleasant young man making a success of advertising. *Margery* (Miss MADGE COMPTON) is plumply content with married life in the suburbs of Birmingham. *Hilda* (Miss NAN MUNRO) is an attractive eccentric who spends half her life going back to see that taps are really off, and the other half, somewhat surprisingly, in making two thousand a year out of her own business. And *Cynthia* (Miss VALERIE TAYLOR) has been living with a married man in Paris for seven years, during which she has not come home.

He has just left her, and her position is the centre of gravity of the play. She is its most impressive character,

finely and economically drawn and interpreted by Miss TAYLOR with a skill which suggests suffering too deep to be expressed. Yet I think there is a weakness in her relationship with her



NURSERY MEMORIES

Dora Randolph . . . DAME MARIE TEMPEST
Charles Randolph . . . MR. LEON QUARTERMAINE

mother. She has stayed away so long because she has been afraid her mother would find out about her love-affair and be terribly hurt; but when, towards the end of the play, she and her mother

talk frankly, *Dora* amazes her by being completely understanding. I feel that *Dora*, whose outlook must have mellowed very rapidly during those seven years, would have been the last woman (she was an octopus, remember) to allow her favourite daughter to remain so suspiciously aloof in a city which can now be easily visited in an hour-and-a-half.

The second most important character—there are various in-laws to provide fuel for family squabbles, and three engaging children—is *Dora's* companion, *Fenny* (Miss ANGELA BADDELEY), who toils cheerfully to keep an under-staffed house in working order because she is secretly in love with *Nicholas*. He all but loses her to an egg-gathering man up the lane, and her honest distress gives Miss BADDELEY another opportunity to show what a good actress she is; but he comes to his senses.

The strength of the play lies in its sympathetic acknowledgment of the fact that an outwardly successful family taking stock of itself in maturity can find the process painful, and in the family atmosphere which Miss SMITH builds up so surely and which MOTLEY supports in three delightful sets.

No character dominates the scene. Miss TEMPEST has good lines and an undercurrent of seriousness which makes her part more interesting than any she has had lately. She operates her tentacles with her full charm and discretion. Mr. GIELGUD is excellent, and triumphs when faced by the almost impossible, an emotional speech at a family banquet. Mr. QUARTERMAINE adapts himself unselfishly to interpret a pale personality. And Miss KATE CUTLER cuts a splendid dash as an old lady of seventy who is still ardent in her heart.

Of the others, several of whom are not entirely audible, at any rate to the fifteenth row of the stalls, I have only space enough to mention Miss ANNIE ES-MOND's *Nanny*, who passes every nursery test. ERIC.



THE YOUNG BROADCASTER

Grace Fenning MISS ANGELA BADDELEY
Nicholas Randolph MR. JOHN GIELGUD
William Harvey MASTER PAT SYLVESTER

The B.B.C. Moves with the Times

From the B.B.C. announcement to Empire listeners on September 15th:—

"After 1.55 p.m. J for Justice will be replaced by P for Progress."

Holiday Tasks

III.—Shall and Will

(1) WHICH do you say, Bobby?—

"I will go by the 3.30."

"I shall go from Victoria."

"What shall I do?"

"What will I do?"

"What will you do?"

"What shall you do?"

"I would like to see Vesuvius."

"I should like to eat that bun."

"I would like to have gone to the pictures."

"I should like to have gone to the pictures."

"I should have liked to go to the pictures."

"I should have liked to have gone to the pictures."

"I said I should biff him."

"I said I would punch his nose."

"He said he should biff me."

(2) Does it matter?

Well, consider the following:—

"You will not confess. I shall be hanged."

"You shall not confess. I will be hanged."

"I shall be divorced; my wife is determined."

"I will be divorced; I am determined."

"Thou shalt not kill."

"Thou wilt not kill."

"He said he would marry the girl."

"He said he *should* marry the girl (but wouldn't)."

* * * * *

Rivet your mind to these examples, Bobby. For, odious boy, I suspect that you are careless concerning "will" and "shall," and think that, whatever the lie, it matters not at all which club you take from the bag. And who can blame you? Leader-writers on some of the penny papers think little of it too.

But, "following" this lecture, there will be no excuse. (What a lovely "following"!)

"I" and "we," Bobby, demand "shall" and "should" when the talk is of simple futurity or is simply conditional. So you must say

"I shall swim,"

not

"I will swim,"

and

"I should smile,"

not

"I would smile."

"What does it matter?" you say, maybe, corrupted by the illiterate who

deprecate "rules." Either way you know that I am going to swim."

Ah, but wait a minute. Suppose the dialogue goes like this:—

You. I shall swim after lunch.

Granny. You will not. You must wait for two hours after all that pudding.

You (defiant). I will swim after lunch.

The "will" implies "whatever you say." It indicates (a) a fixed intention and (b) a desperate determination. Your "shall" was merely a mild prediction.

But if you had said "will" in the first place you would have wasted it. You would have exhausted your reserves in the first encounter.

See?

"With 'I' and 'we' go 'should' and 'shall'."

When the prediction's casual;

But if volition's understood

Then I must have a 'will' or 'would.'

'I shall' permits me still to falter;

'I will' is wanted at the altar."

A jolly little thing, and all our own work.

* * * * *

But with the second and third persons, my poor muddled child—with "you," "he," "they" and "it," the words you want are "will" and "would." Thus if you are predicting swimming by your sister you say

"She will swim."

Then, if Granny is a nuisance about this also, you say defiantly

"She *shall* swim,"

meaning that she's jolly well going to



"MASTER GEORGE WOULD PREFER RICE-PUDDING."

swim ("Shall" is here a "notional verb," Bobby, but we won't go into that.)

Go back now to the lunch-time dialogue, and observe how simple and beautiful is the English tongue. First you make your quiet forecast—

"I shall swim; and Elizabeth will swim."

Granny makes her nonsensical objection, and you then say, fiercely, expressing "intention, volition and choice"—

"I *will* swim; and Elizabeth *shall* swim."

Now close your eyes and say three times: "Thank Heaven I am not a foreigner trying to learn this language."

And add to the little poem above—

"But if the person is the third
Or second, 'will' or 'would' 's the word;
With 'you' or 'he' 'shall' is not just,
Unless by 'shall' you mean he 'must.'"

Amazing, is it not, that in so many centuries of English poesy and grammar no one before has written verses on this difficult theme!

* * * * *

Now for another enraging little hare—

"I would like to . . ." "I should like to have . . ." "I should have liked to have . . ."

Is it possible, Bobby, to exaggerate the vagueness and diffidence with which you express yourself in this area of life? Take heart, for most of the English-speakers are in the same rudderless boat. Whenever an invitation is accepted or refused the horrid problem has to be faced. As a rule it is not faced. We jumble a messy-looking lot of words together and pass guiltily on, hoping that none will notice the mess. Yet, Bobby, it is all quite simple—or, after this delicious lecture, it will be.

First, your "I would like to swim" is loathsome.

This puzzles you, we know, for you have just been told that "I" and "we" liked "would" where "volition" or "choice" was expressed. That is so. And in the very old days you would have said

"I would swim,"

as the wandering knight would roll into an inn or castle and remark—

"I would eat and drink."

But now you indicate your desire to swim with the verb "like," so

"would" is not required. Indeed it violates the rules as vilely as

"I would try to swim."

See?

* * * * *

Very well, then. You must say

"I should like (or try) to swim."

Now, having been put to bed after your rebellious but unsuccessful insistence on swimming, you reflect upon the past. What do you say?

Not, we hope,

"I should have liked to have swum."

And not, in this particular case,

"I should like to have swum"

(though you might say generally,

"I should like to have swum the Channel."

meaning that you would like to have such a feat in your dossier or recollection)

but

"I should have liked to swim."

This last, Bobby, is the correct formula for refusing invitations, a very important department of life. You are asked to speak at the Burbleton Ladies' Luncheon Club. You cannot bear the notion. Your excellent secretary knows this and drafts a polite refusal. She begins—

"DEAR MRS. FLOAT,—I should love to accept your invitation to speak at your luncheon in October next year..."

This would be well enough grammatically if she went on—

"if the fates permitted," or, "if it were in my power."

She does go on—

"—but unfortunately I shall be shooting tigers in India, and therefore must regretfully refuse."

She has thus made you contradict yourself. What is more, she has played a mean trick on Mrs. Float by leading her up the garden-path. After reading the first phrase poor Mrs. Float cries out ecstatically, "My dear, he's coming!" and what follows brings her down with a heavy and unmerited bump. But she knows the worst at once if you write—

"I should have loved to accept... but what a hope!" etc.

Again, say not that these things do not matter. The same mistake, we have observed, is made on the telephone by those bright maidens who delight the male. They are asked to dance, dine



"COULD I POSSIBLY HAVE A VEST POCKET LARGE ENOUGH TO TAKE A VEST POCKET CAMERA?"

or marry. They reply in rapturous tones—

"My dear, I should LOVE to..."

The heart of the male leaps up to heaven, for this answer is far more than he expected.

They continue—

"But the thing is, I can't, because I'm packing."

The heart of the man swoops down and is bruised unnecessarily. For if the lady had begun by saying

"My dear, I should have LOVED to..."

the heart of the man would never have left its normal level of resignation and meagre hope. It is a bad thing to bruise unnecessarily the tender hearts of men.

That, Bobby, is by no means all there is to say about "shall" and "will"; but it is all you will get from us now. To your books, boy!

A. P. H.

Extenuating Circumstance

"Complainant added: 'Mrs. Jukes caught hold of my hair, and I hit her across the face with a fish I had in my hand. It was a freshwater fish.'"

Report in "The Cannonk Advertiser."

Armand Is Rumbled

ALTHOUGH he was no more than middle-aged, the man who slammed his suitcase down beside mine on the table in the Customs-shed had a lean brown face which was furrowed all over with wrinkles as if a leather-worker had been trying out his craft upon it. He exuded what is loosely called bonhomie. His clothes were of sky-blue tweed, his shoes were co-respondent's and pointed like torpedoes, while his cigar, which was cruelly black, he was chewing and smoking at the same time with equal satisfaction. And he was leaning across the table winking shamelessly at one of the Customs-women.

"Some folks don't get their first big kick out of being in France again until the man in the buffy-car slops soup down their necks," he said to me suddenly, and his voice was neither one thing nor the other, "but it comes to me the moment I clap eyes on these Customs-girls. They're wunnerful. Look at that one! She might have come straight from a ringside seat by the guillotine, only she's left her knitting behind. And I'll betcher she knows her job. These sisters see through leather like glass. Hi! Gertie!"

One of the Customs-women, whose patient features reflected the mature outlook on life which enabled her to spend her working hours rummaging

through layer after layer of male underclothing without marring the dignity of an official occasion with the faintest blush, came over and handed him the usual list announcing that sprocket-wheels in bulk and hippopotami and a lot of other things were contraband.

"Nothing at all," he assured her. "Just a little book on meadow-flowers. But that wouldn't count."

The woman took him all in with one keen glance, and then asked him to open his bag. Something very like uneasiness flashed into his eyes, but a moment later he whipped out his keys with a show of cheerfulness.

"There you are!" he cried. "Try and not crease next week's shirt."

The woman went through the bag methodically. She found a simple outfit for a week-end, but nothing more, and she was about to pick up her chalk and mark the lid when she stopped and looked at him again. He was watching her very closely, and one of his hands was trembling so violently that a long ash from his cigar flipped right across me. His other hand was white at the knuckles where it gripped the table.

"One moment, M'sieu," she murmured.

"Search away, sister," he told her, and I saw him glance quickly round the shed as if to make certain of its geography. Every millimetre of the bag she went over this time, prodding and tapping like a doctor desperate for a diagnosis; and when at last she

came on a long slit in the back of the lining she dived in her fingers and fished out a large glass phial full of white powder. Five more followed. I must say, it was exciting. Before the wrinkled man could pull himself together a gendarme was beside him and the Chief Douanier was asking with icy politeness what it was that he carried so secretly in phials.

He only hesitated for a second.

"Fruit-salt," he said. He was looking feverishly about the shed and peering at the crowd which now pressed round us.

"Thank you, M'sieu," said the Chief Douanier. "Who can witness that these phials came out of this suitcase? Can you, M'sieu?"

I had to admit I could.

"Very well," said the Chief Douanier, "I must ask both you gentlemen to come into my office."

As the gendarme shepherded us through the mob he kept one hand on the holster of his pistol. All the stolidity had disappeared from the face of the Customs-woman. She already saw herself being called out into the station-yard in a week or two to be kissed on behalf of a grateful Government by an old gentleman with a beard and have the Legion of Honour planted on her heaving bosom, and in a year or two stepping inevitably into the *espadrilles* of the Chief Douanier.

"I have sent for Monsieur Flaubert," this official told us, "the chemist from across the square. He will doubtless verify your explanation." But from the way he rubbed his hands it was evident that he too was confident that here was the catch of the season, an *escroc* who had perhaps long made oafs of the international police. The wrinkled man had pulled out a notebook and was scribbling copiously.

Monsieur Flaubert, a thin person in khaki trousers and pince-nez, came quickly, and on being given the phials of powder began a complicated experiment over the spirit-stove he had brought with him. We all stood round breathlessly, except the wrinkled man, who was still scribbling.

"If it's fruit-salt it'll surely fizz in water," I suggested. But such a simple solution made no appeal to the man of science.

"Attendez!" he muttered abstractedly, "*je fais une chose.*"

"A mere formality," the Chief Douanier murmured to me, "there can be no doubt. This is indeed a great day for us."

He was shaking hands covertly with his assistant behind the gendarme when at last Monsieur Flaubert straight-



"WOULDN'T WE BE ENJOYING THIS IF ONLY WE COULD PAY THE BILL!"



"HULLO! I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON A DIET, OLD MAN."

"YES, SO I AM—BUT ON AN OCCASION LIKE THIS I BLOW THE EXPANSE."

tened his long back and coughed importantly.

"Beyond a doubt," he said, "beyond a shadow of doubt, for I have employed a test which allows of no margin of error what—"

"Come, man, out with it!" the Chief Douanier begged.

"—ever, the contents of all six phials is pure, quite pure—"

"Yes?"

"—fruit-salt."

There was a hush like death. The wrinkled man broke it, slamming to his

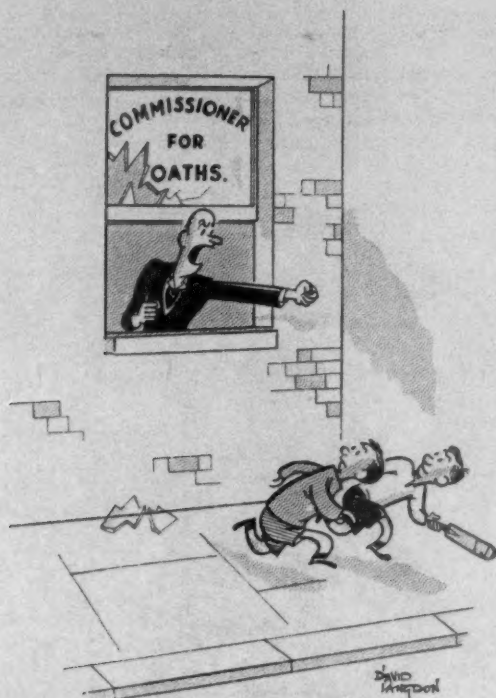
notebook and cramming it noisily into his pocket.

"Don't say I didn't tell you!" he cried. "But all the same I feel bad about it, and the first thing I do when I get back is to get Mr. Schnitzbaum to send you all invitations to our première to kind of make up. You've been swell. You see how it is, folks, we've shot that Customs-scene seventeen times where Armand gets rumbled with the dope, and each time the rushes were lousier. There wasn't no atmosphere, no fire about it, nothing hung together,

and yet even Mr. Schnitzbaum couldn't say why. So Mr. Schnitzbaum says, 'Hell, boys, one of you yeggs go out and act suspicious and be rumbled yourselves with a load of dope and get the whole darned business on to paper then and there, and if you don't bring back a real live scene what Armand wouldn't be ashamed to be rumbled in the lot of you's fired.' So you see?"

I don't think I shall ever forget the expression on the face of the Chief Douanier.

ERIC.



"A MURRAIN ON YOU, VARLETS!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Hanged to be Born

OF the LAUREATE's gift for striking nomenclature the title of his new novel, *Dead Ned* (HEINEMANN, 7/6), is a good example. Its sub-title is more than striking: it is startling. Yet it is as nearly accurate as is humanly possible, for the story is almost literally "the autobiography of a corpse." *Ned Mansell*, who tells it, is hanged for murder and only just resuscitated by the skill of a friendly surgeon: and the life which he lives afterwards, with the rope still dangling perilously over him, is so different and disconnected from that which went before that his revival may be said to constitute a new birth. A promising young physician, he did not commit the murder, for there is not a grain of malice in him. But he was the murdered man's adopted heir, on the fatal day he was heard quarrelling with that cranky if warm-hearted old admiral, and the evidence against him, as coloured by the craft of his enemies, was apparently strong enough to convince any jury. So he is plunged from fair prospects into the hell of Newgate, carted to Tyburn Tree, and only escapes to the hell which an eighteenth-century ship so often was. What happens to him there and presumably on that Coast of Dead Ned of which the admiral gave the boy such intriguing glimpses, "I shall tell you," says *Ned*, "in the second volume." That is good hearing, for this story is Mr. JOHN MASEFIELD at his best. It has the vigour and something of the poetry of a ballad.

Us Children

There are two sides to the popular game of getting your own back on deceased parents, and what is intended to be a posthumous jibe at a bully may give a rather tart impression of the retaliatory survivor. "In all ages Children have found their Parents Warnings rather than Examples," says Mrs. MARY RHYS. (The capitals are hers and the aphoristic style—by *Religio Medici* out of *The Young Visitors*—is hers too.) And though you might oppose to this piece of sententiousness the more characteristically English chorus, "My father did so before me," you must admit that "The Revd. Gent.," vicar of a Cornish parish and father of the six little *Rundells*, was an example to deter. He worked his children like helots in the intervals of giving them the sound classical education that was responsible for their odd games and odder dialogue; and this though his capable and humorous wife did her best to mitigate their lot. Her portrait is some compensation for his; but it is their small daughter's Horatian praise of modest contentment—not a childish tribute at all—that is the unexpectedly beautiful high-water mark of *Scenes from Family Life* (COUNTRY LIFE, 10/6).

Love and Duty

The theme is old enough, but Mr. GILBERT FRANKAU can be trusted to bring it well up to date. *Royal Regiment* (HUTCHINSON, 8/6) is as engrossing a novel as he has written. He concerns himself here with the story of *Thomas Rockingham*, Major, R.A., and *Camilla*, the American-born wife of "Hawk" *Wethered*, otherwise *Colonel Sir Guy Wethered*, D.S.O., M.C., etc., who was a law unto himself and possessed a six-inch bar of miniature medals and a startling streak of silver in his jet-black hair. How "Rusty" *Rockingham* and his colonel's wife fell in love with each other at sight and came within an ace of providing *Sir Guy* with material for a divorce suit, which would have meant the gallant Major abandoning his battery and all that it signified to him, and how in the end, thanks chiefly to the lady and to the effect of certain historical and other incidents, everything came more or less right, many thousands of entranced



"HERE, ALBERT, THAT'S NO PART OF THE KOZY-KITCHIN SERVICE!"

readers have no doubt already discovered with beating hearts for themselves. (But the unfortunate "Hank" is surely treated rather scurvily in the process.) However, Mr. FRANKAU persuades us easily that he knows all about gunners in general and the Royal Artillery Mess at Woolwich in particular. His competence is unquestioned, his dialogue convincing, and if he seems in this book to have posed a difficult problem and taken some time over its solution he has certainly contrived plenty of excitement. "A Drama of Contemporary Behaviours" is his own description of *Royal Regiment*, and he brings to his aid in winding it up another marriage with an American lady which has, most will think, been quite sufficiently handled in print already. Still, this is a good story.

The Under Dog Gets Up

In *Spella Ho*, by H. E. BATES

(Published by CAPE at 8/6),

The author at some length relates

The story of a pile of bricks,

To wit a residence or mansion

Of stately shape and old renown

Which witnesses the grim expansion

Of an adjacent mining town.

This forms the background to a tale

Of one who, setting out from scratch,

Knows hunger, unemployment, jail,

But proves that Fate has met her match;

Blind to the lurid reputation

That follows in his ruthless stride,

He reaches wealth and social station,

Friendless, unloved, unsatisfied.

A sort of infra-superman,

(With Mr. BATES's help) self-made,

He shapes his doings on a plan,

Heartless, unbending, unafraid;

And one is puzzled to discover

Why such a ruthless course as his

Is readable from opening cover

To final page, but so it is.

Under the Béret Blanc

You cannot grudge M. MARIUS DUTREY, Head Chef of the Langham Hotel, the use of his native tongue in compiling a *Calendrier Gastronomique* (MULLER, 7/6) founded on his television conferences in London. French is the language of the menu, and there are menus in this inspiring book; but it is mainly devoted to suggestions—with an historico-gastronomical background—of the culinary possibilities of each month. What though M. DUTREY's seasons are inveterately French? If we have no *Reinettes du Canada* in January, no blanched dandelions in February, no crayfish in May, no newly-



DEA EX MACHINÀ!

(A Reminiscence.)

George Du Maurier, October 3rd, 1891.

podded haricots in July and no pumpkins in October it is only because we are too lazy to produce them—a

state of things this book should help to remedy. Some of its quotations in verse—those, for instance, on the pig—outstrip the luscious pœans of CHARLES LAMB; but an asparagus story of truly Gallic ruthlessness comes as an adequate corrective of any excessive sentiment. M. DUTREY's fundamental philosophy is as sound as it is engaging. "*J'ose avancer qu'il y aurait moins de nuages dans le ciel contemporain, si le culte de la bonne chère était pratiqué comme il devrait l'être.*"

Soho

For some time the reader may find little in *Jacobson's Ladder* (LONGMANS, 7/6) to raise it above other readable and competently-written novels, the number of which nowadays seems so confusingly large. But looked back on and considered as a whole, Mr. JOHN PUDNEY's story has a firm outline and a distinction very much rarer than readability and competence of writing. *Jacobson* is a small shopkeeper in Rushlit Street, Soho, who is roused to a sort of frenzy—or, as his neighbours say, goes crazy—when his wife leaves him. Passionately determined to prove his importance by commercial success and basking in what he feels certain is Divine approval, he launches out, and for a time everything he touches turns to gold. The character and the characters of Rushlit Street emerge as he climbs: "the real Soho," as the blurb no doubt correctly calls it. This is a good novel, well worked out, and deserving of the success that we hope it is not too honest to get.



"LUCKY I'M WEARING A SUIT WITH TWO PAIRS OF TROUSERS."

Antarctic Prelude

Commander FRANK WORSLEY's early experience as an apprentice in the clipper *Wairoa*, which he describes under the title, *First Voyage in a Square-Rigged Ship* (GEOFFREY BLES, 10/6), was one well calculated to serve as a prelude to the arduous and endurance of his later Antarctic adventures. After a boyhood spent on a run in New Zealand, which provides the material for two interesting opening chapters, he sailed from Lyttelton for England by way of the Horn. His account of the voyage is one that challenges comparison with DANA's classic *Two Years Before the Mast*, which it resembles alike in its close and convincing detail, its portraits of seafaring types, and in the combined vividness and simplicity of its prose; and it contains more than one passage that should find a place in any future anthology of the sea. The nautical historian too will find in it the complicated evolutions and processes which made up the daily routine of sailing-ship life explained with an admirable clearness. The keynote of the book is one of enthusiasm and regret for vanished beauty and the lost art of sail, though the author does not fail to record the other side of the

medal, and the hardships—many of them, such as inadequate rest under the "watch-and-watch" system, quite unnecessary—which formed part of the sail-trained seaman's life.

A Nice Bit of Blackmail

Although the mechanics of her murders are worked out with lightness and ingenuity, the novels of Miss NGAIO MARSH are mainly notable for natural dialogue and excellent characterisation; and this is another way of saying that she writes so well that it is a pity she confines herself to crime. *Death in a White Tie* (BLES, 7/6) moves quickly and its humour is sure. Once again that attractive young man, *Detective-Inspector Alleyn*, is called out, this time to avenge a friend, an elderly man-about-town, who has met his end at the hands of a blackmailing gang which he has been helping to run down. A great many lines have to be tried before the jigsaw falls dramatically into place; when it does those who have followed *Alleyn's* career will be glad to learn that his triumph is double, for at last *Agatha Troy*, the painter, agrees to marry him. Miss MARSH, however, presents us with a problem when she makes *Troy* say, five lines from the end, "I know my mind at last. I couldn't be parked." What can this mean? Parked on the shelf? A misprint for "parted"? Perhaps Miss MARSH will explain.

Secret Services

The Platinum Cat (COLLINS, 7/6) is guaranteed to provide a mystery that is cleverly concealed. Moreover Mr. MILES BURTON's story is tidily constructed, and on this occasion it is pleasant to note that his amateur investigator, *Desmond Merriem*, does not drive

Inspector Arnold into a seat so far back that its occupier is negligible, if not entirely invisible. In fact the *Inspector* takes his share of what honours are going. Some tricky and very dirty work with blotting-paper may not be quite credible, but unquestionably Mr. BURTON keeps his readers agog and provides them with numerous alarms and several well-organised excursions.

Mr. Punch on Tour

At Nottingham, from October 8th to November 5th, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern *Punch* Artists will be on view at the Museum and Art Gallery, The Castle. The Exhibition will be shown later at Perth, Dundee, Dumfries and Kilmarnock.

Invitations to visit the Exhibition at any of these places will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, *Punch* Office, 10, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

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Charivaria

"SHRUBBERY which shows signs of being weak or unhealthy should be lifted, root-pruned and planted immediately," says a gardening note. On whom?

★ ★ ★

"It is quite inconceivable that the U.S.A. would invade Canada, or *vice versa*," declares a writer. But then neither has signed a pact promising not to.

★ ★ ★

Signor MUSSOLINI, in full uniform, has been photographed doing running exercises with the Bersaglieri. This reminds us very strongly of Field-Marshal GOERING, whose uniform is also quite full.

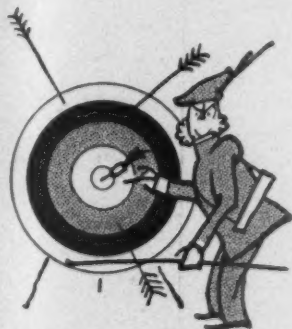
★ ★ ★

Face the Facts

"Major Lamb believes that tanks and motor-vehicles can never be made to do everything a horse can do."—*Liverpool Post*.

★ ★ ★

"Coloured shirts," it is observed, "have suffered a severe eclipse in Britain." Our laundries have such aggressive methods.



★ ★ ★

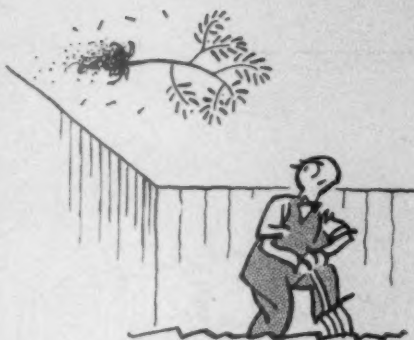
A new machine automatically calculates darts scores and renders the players' mental arithmetic unnecessary. We understand that the apparatus has already been exhaustively tested to many decimal pints.

★ ★ ★

"Mr. R. Lee, of the Boot Inn, Chipping Sodbury, reported that he saw a man climbing down a wall in the rear of the premises. The building was surrounded and the rooms searched by police officers, but nothing was discovered.

Drastic proposals of this nature could hardly be considered without further consultations with the Cabinet and the French Government.

But Herr Hitler is in no mood to brook delay."—*Bristol Paper*. Then let him climb the wall himself.



What is very difficult to understand just now is why explorers keep setting off to discover new countries when we are having so much trouble with those we have got.

★ ★ ★

"It is fairly safe to say that Herr HITLER has at last won his way into the hearts of the German people," in the opinion of one writer. The first hundred cheers were the hardest.

★ ★ ★

A sports critic maintains that our heavyweight boxers can hold their own with the next. Then we can only suppose that they keep having the misfortune of coming up against the next but one.

★ ★ ★

That's Co-operation

"As he talks he leans forward over the table with his elbows supporting his small ordinary hands, which in turn support his chin." *Daily Mail*.

★ ★ ★

A London business man always carries two umbrellas. One to use and one to forget somewhere, of course.

★ ★ ★

It is claimed that a goat appearing in an American circus can sing. If goats could be trained to yodel, two characteristic features of Swiss mountain scenery could be economically combined into one.

★ ★ ★

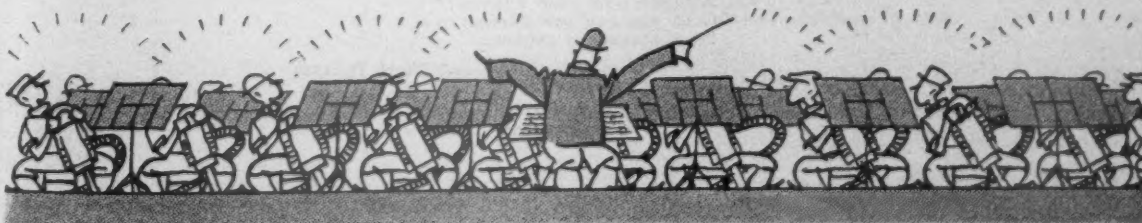


"Brighton. £60. Sweets, etc. Hse. 18/- incl. 1 onr. 34 yrs. Trial." *Advt. in Evening Paper*.

That should tide you over the crisis.

★ ★ ★

A new form of road-repairing machine is said to do the work of five navvies. This is thought to be considerably more than the five navvies ever succeeded in doing.



STEPPING STONES I.



THE GOOSE-STEP

"GOOSEY GOOSEY GANDER,
WHITHER DOST THOU WANDER?"
"ONLY THROUGH THE RHINELAND—
PRAY EXCUSE MY BLUNDER!"

"PUNCH," March 18, 1936.

STEPPING STONES II.



GOOD HUNTING

MUSSOLINI. "ALL RIGHT, ADOLF—I NEVER HEARD A SHOT."

"PUNCH," February 23, 1938.

STEPPING STONES III.



PAS D'INTIMIDATION,
OR THE PAN-GERMAN PEACE CORYPHÉE

"Punch," March 23, 1938.



PEACE IN ARMS



AT HOME

THE MILLIONAIRE

Lucy's Scheme Fails

DEAR GEORGE,—We have had a brush with the neighbours. It happened like this. On Monday evening Lucy said didn't W. Shakespeare say music hath charms to soothe the savage breast? The immortal bard mentioned it casually I said. Well she said, it may be okeydoke with savages but its playing merry hell with a civilised girl like me, I am grousing re next doors wireless which from morn to night plays nothing but dance bands hidehoing and parlaymar damoorring. Too true I said, its so loud you dont even have to listen to hear it, I will lodge a protest and give them short shrift. Or no shrift at all she said, oh revoor.

I went to the door and rang and a man came out with a large size in dogs and said well? Incidentally yes I said, but that is not either here or there, I have called re wireless. Oh he said, we will pay next week as we usually dont. But no I said, you are labouring under a delusion. A political agitator hay? he said, trying to turn the working man against the capitalist system. My dear sir I said, I am an adjacent neighbour and have come to say if music be the food of love pipe down as Cupid is being very over fed for a boy of his size. You do not say? he said.

I dont want to cut up ugly I said, but if you must have the wireless overwrought why not tune in a bit of Beethoven

Bach and Co? Orchestral music is rotten to the core angly he said, leave his leg alone Julius, even royalty doesnt approve. How so? I said. Look at how often Sir T. Beecham and his boys play in the Queens hall he said, if the Queen thought them okay she would ask them into the sitting room all friendly like, dont bite him yet Julius.

This dog Julius seems very anti social I said. He wouldnt hurt a fly he said. No I said, he looks to me like as if he is out after bigger game but our dumb friends apart will you kindly abate the wireless? I cant he said, its food and drink to my wife, come here a minute Daisy. Then a lady came into the hall singing and talking all at once viz honey its funny I love you what is it dear? Ive fallen for someone whos fallen for someone whos fallen for someone like you good evening Mr. Twiss isnt it? I gotta hunch youre my honeybunch cheery bye and went in again. You see? he said, crooner crazy, she sings all day to the wireless but it stops her nagging me so why worry? also I myself must have noise to prevent me brooding oer palmy days now past and gone.

Ex slate club secretary? I said. Ex echo he said, me and my colleague did so well in Switzerland we almost had squatters rights in the lap of luxury, he donned quaint garb and a thick foreign accent and took tourists up the mountain to hear the reverberous echo at ten bob a go. When they

shouted yoo-hoo or suchlike I was behind some bushes below and shouted yoo-hoo or suchlike as the case may have been but one fatal day such as which I shall never forget some perishing woman shouted who are yoo-hoo? and in a mad reckless moment I replied mind your suchansuch business Madam.

Me and my colleague had to flee the country in all directions he said, and Julius who had took a fancy to me insisted on coming too, his father was a St. Bernard who absconded with the regulation cask of brandy and painted the gay city red with a French poodle who was I fear no St, but Julius is pretty steady taking him by and large, he goes each evening to see Chloe a bull terrier he is keen on in a nice refined way but is always in by ten. Reverting to our muttuns I said, your wireless is such that I cant hear myself speak at home. Youre not missing much he said. Kindly delete rudery and oblige I said, will you throttle down or not? Once and for all he said, or not and or not again making twice and for all, now go.

I went back and said Lucy I fear the next doors are very self determinating and my opinion of them is no higher than next years daisies. Tell me all she said, which I did and she said oh very well we shall see.

Next evening Lucy said Im going round to Mothers for a little comparative peace and quiet, so long. When she came back just before ten the next doors were calling Julius Julius come along do but to no avail so they came round and said have you per chance seen Julius? he left home as usual to see his girl friend but is now missing. Well Lucy said, dogs ears are so sensitive they can even hear inaudible sounds, maybe the wireless has drove him off. For Julius we will suffer anything they said, and switched off instantly.

All next day Lucy said it was heaven with no wireless next door and it was so quiet that even in October you could almost hear the rustle of spring. Well Thursday came and went and Friday consequently followed and still no Julius. The next doors stuck a notice on the gate viz lost a semi St. Bernard answering gruffly to name of Julius, wearing collar and three quarter length coat, there is another notice at the police station in case you dont see this one, but nothing happened only a sailor came and said he thought hed seen Julius at Portsmouth and if they gave him the fare there he would go and make sure.

Suddenly on Saturday who hoves into view but Julius rolling from hither to thither. Where have you been you unprintable noun you? the next doors said, but Julius just pushed them aside and lurched in. Next day the man said hay Twiss, something has befallen Julius, last night he just sat on the rug with his chin on his paw and pondered and when I offered him a noggin of tea he looked at me like as if Id insulted him, I think what your wife said re wireless is feasible because if I turn it on above a trickle he growls something shocking.

I went back and told Lucy and she said ah I was afraid so, my scheme failed somewhat. Lucy I said have you been putting your spoke into the common wheel again? come unbosom yourself. Well she said, I thought of complaining to the police re wireless but it seemed a delerterious thing to do so I thought Id try okaying the trouble by friendly guile, so knowing they are devoted to Julius I thought if they lost him pro tem and I found him they would say how can we repay you and I could say kindly put a sock in your loudspeaker and oblige.

Proceed I said. I arranged with my ex flame Alfred she said, who is a night watch gentleman to keep Julius Tuesday night and Id call for him Wednesday but unfortunately

while Alfred was dozing Julius found some loose methylated spirits and Im afraid his fathers erring nature swept over him for he drank it all and when I called for him he was sleeping like a stack of logs, in fact it wasn't until to-day that he sobered up enough to come home. I am aghast I said. Anyway she said, I think the wireless will abate a bit because poor Julius must have such a thick head on him that any noise above a whisper must all but split it open.

You are morally responsible for driving Julius to drink, I said, promise never to redo so. I promise she said, but I have forebodings because Chloe his girl friend saw him rolling home under the influence and wont so much as look at him now, in fact I think unless she relents soon Julius will go on the binge again to drown the sorrows of unrequited love.

Well George as I told Lucy, any more of her sub rosary will wreck our marriage and she must remember that though marriages are made in heaven they go to the other place when they want repairs. I hope you are well and am
Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Sorry but theres no room for a P.S. George.

"Under the soothing attentions of the waiter in the clean white apron, Mr. Pollard consumed half a lobster, a piece of ripe Camembert, and a large pear, accompanied by a bottle of hock. The after-effect was to endow Mr. Pollard with sensations of mellow well-being such as he had not experienced in years. He wondered what Miss Browne was doing now. . . ."—*Evening Paper Short Story*.

Perhaps she was enjoying a bottle of Camembert '23.



"GOT A JOB AT LAST, MUM—POSING FOR A FASHION ARTIST."

At the Pictures

A FEW DISTRACTIONS

WELL, the New Zealander sketching the ruins of St. Paul's may be interested to read something, and in the hazards of the collapse of European civilisation a copy of this page, lining an asbestos box, might not impossibly prove to be it. Let us therefore begin with a film that involves one of the indirect authors of the whole trouble. In *A Royal Divorce* there are several remarks that at this moment strike a chord perhaps more responsive than the makers of the film, even only a few months ago, allowed for. I remember one: *Napoleon* (PIERRE BLANCHAR) speaks with bitter impatience of a mode of government that "must dazzle and astonish all the time. As soon as it fails, it collapses." We all know who might be saying that. . . . but NAPOLEON, on the other hand, had some sense.

Moreover, he led his own troops. M. BLANCHAR is excellent here in suggesting, with very slight material—for the story is mainly of *Napoleon's* love for *Josephine* (RUTH CHATTERTON) not a study of his methods—the force of character and fierce ability of the young General. The film is uneven, as a love-story it concentrates much on trivial moments, and it is not exactly historically accurate, but quite a lot of it is worth seeing. Miss CHATTERTON is good, though sometimes her portrait of a frivolous woman seems forced.

I did not find the "moving" parts moving at all, but I saw other people who evidently did.

Or how about Alaska, with DOROTHY LAMOUR? That should take your mind off things. In most of her films Miss LAMOUR has had to lie about in a sarong in the tropics, but Alaska gives her a better chance. Coping with the fall in temperature by wearing a jersey, she appears in *Spawn of the North*, among the tough salmon-fishers, as the owner of a saloon, and shows that she is a better actress than might have been supposed.

But she does not play a very large part in the story, which deals principally with the two friends *Tyler* (GEORGE RAFT) and *Jim* (HENRY FONDA). As soon as we meet them—*Tyler* in the *Who Cares*, *Jim* in the *Old Reliable*—we know by in-

stinct that one will sacrifice himself for the other, and Mr. RAFT duly steers into a crumbling iceberg at the end to save Mr. FONDA from being killed by the villainous fish-pirate (AKIM TAMIROFF). Mr. FONDA gets



J.H.D.

LOVE'S TOY

Napoleon PIERRE BLANCHAR

the girl—the other girl, the one he has loved all along (LOUISE PLATT), for there is no rivalry in this department. *Spawn of the North* is a meaty, thrilling and amusing picture with some remarkable photography; but it has



J.H.D.W.D.

ALASKAN GROUP

Tyler Dawson GEORGE RAFT
Diane LOUISE PLATT
Jim Kimberlee HENRY FONDA
Nicky Duval DOROTHY LAMOUR

incomprehensible moments (is it a salmon-fisher's boat that sports the harpoon-gun with the unlimited ammunition, and if so, why?), and the night battle with the pirates, exciting though it is, goes on far too horribly far too long.

Humour is what they are anxiously advertising in many films nowadays, and humour, in and out of season, is what they have always sought. Who shall say they are wrong, when every joke in *Prison Without Bars*, a story of a girls' reformatory in France, is greeted with the guffaws it was obviously meant to arouse? . . . I shall. Let's leave it there—the idea is one impossible to drive in.

The story is of the new superintendent (EDNA BEST) who changes the exceedingly brutal régime for one of sweetness and light, having as reward the bitterness of seeing the doctor (BARRY K. BARNES) to whom she was engaged fall in love with one of the girls (CORINNE LUCHAIRE), who receives a pardon and goes away to marry him.

This is the British version of the French *Prison Sans Barreaux*, which I have not yet seen. CORINNE LUCHAIRE takes the same part in each, but I dare swear she is better in the French version and that the French version is better as a whole. She looks lovely here all right, but also—except when the story demands a smear on her face—she looks as if she had just stepped out of a beauty-parlour under a thousand-watt light, and so do several of the other characters. Then there is the handling of the wisecracks, all apparently designed to appeal to the easily amused.

Algiers is a Hollywood remake of *Pépé le Moko*, and on the whole a good one, though CHARLES BOYER will never seem right as *Pépé* to anyone who saw JEAN GABIN. The film sticks very closely to the French original except for the end, which is not so good. I was also a little worried by the name, pronounced as (among other variants) Pepper, Peppy, and P'p'l Meaukeau. But these are small points: the film should distract you as well as any film could.

Finally there is *Mademoiselle ma Mère*, with DANIELLE DARIÉUX again. I first saw this about thirteen months ago in Paris when the papers were full of the Japanese attack on China; this time I saw it when the papers were full of you know what, and found it just as amusing. R. M.

Are You a Golf Maniac?

It is a well-recognised fact that you will find one or two golf maniacs in nearly any golf-club in the world, and although their fellow-members will be only too glad to point them out to you, the maniacs themselves are frequently in complete ignorance of their abnormality.

It follows that some golfers may be golf maniacs without realising the fact.

The questionnaire set out below has been compiled therefore in order to help them over a real difficulty. So read on, brother, and good luck.

(Note.—Certain marks have been allotted against each question. Where the answers are in the affirmative and the total of these adds up to twenty marks or over, then a mental specialist should be consulted without delay.)

QUESTIONNAIRE

1.—Do you believe in any of the following: Sorcery, necromancy, demonology, spirit rapping, luck negation, hoodoo, voodoo, fluke culture, reincarnation or gnomes? (2 marks each.)

2.—If you believe that supernatural forces are constantly about when you play golf are you convinced that they are after you alone? (10 marks.)

3.—Whenever you see an umbrella in someone's hall do you readily succumb to an urge to pick it up and waggle it at an imaginary ball? (2 marks.)

4.—Would you, for the sake of notoriety, sell your soul to kill accidentally a bull, goat or sheep with your drive? (3 marks.)

5.—If you felt that doing without one of your ribs would give you a fuller swing, would you undergo an operation to have it removed? (5 marks.)

6.—Are you going to leave any of your money to a golf club? (19 marks.)

7.—Do you suck in your moustache ends when you putt, and do you consider this gives you a greater degree of balance? (1 mark each.)

8.—Have you ever caught yourself unconsciously indulging in a pivot while making a speech at a Board Meeting? (5 marks.)

9.—Do you like moles? (4 marks.)

10.—Do you keep a piece of an old motor-car tyre in your golf-bag to dig your teeth into when you start socketing? (7 marks.)

11.—If you have been married more than five years do you really enjoy playing golf with your wife? (8 marks.)



THE CRISIS IN BAYSWATER

12.—Do you like giving detailed accounts of rounds of golf you played several years ago? (12 marks.)

13.—Do you carry a special instrument for measuring the speed of the wind? (7 marks.)

14.—(a) Do you believe in charms? (b) Are you addicted to experimenting with mechanical gadgets such as the electrical contrivance for preventing both your knees from flying up and hitting you in the face at the finish of your drive? (4 marks each.)

15.—Have you ever thought it

would be rather an honour to have a bunker named after you? (15 marks.)

16.—Do you feel the need for good music on a golf course? (10 marks.)

17.—Have you ever played golf by the light of the full moon? (6 marks.)

18.—Is it your custom to study the line of a putt by bending down and looking at it through your legs? (3 marks.)

19.—Do you think rabbits steal golf balls? (8 marks.)

20.—Have you lied much in answering the foregoing questions? (20 marks.)

Is Netball Doomed?

"THE spectre of bodyline bowling has long since been laid in its grave," said the Great Sportswriter, "but cricket has not yet emerged from the doldrums into which it fell during that dismal——"

"Not much good laying spectres in graves," interrupted his stenographer crisply. "They know the trick of them. Come out twice nightly if in the mood."

"Delete spectre, insert corpse—that dismal and unnecessary controversy. Full stop."

"Isn't it a bit late for a cricket summary?"

The Great Sportswriter strode up and down the room in his inimitable manner.

"Take this," he snapped. "Superficial palliatives such as that suggested at last Wednesday's Referees' Convention will do less than nothing to check the canker that is slowly but surely rotting the body of professional football in this country. All the evils inherent in—— Why aren't you taking this down, Miss Wemyss? Do you imagine I am making it up for my own amusement?"

Miss Wemyss raised her delicate eyebrows. "You said it all last week, Mr. Carter."

"By Wignall!" said the Great Sportswriter, smiting his brow, "so I did. What did I write about the week before that?"

"The parlous condition of British Boxing."

"Ha! And before that?"

"Rugby Football. You titled it 'Scrumming malpractices—The Decay of Public Interest—A Pressing Problem.'"

"Weak," said the Great Sportswriter contemptuously. "Flimsy. I had a headache, I remember. What other games are there?"

His stenographer turned over a pile of Press cuttings. "Well, there's billiards—but that was attacked by *The Sunday Squib* a fortnight ago; Squash—trounced by *The Trumpet* on September 18th; Badminton—Badminton, let

me see, yes, there was an exposé of the Badminton ring in *The Sabbath Survey* on September the——"

"Tcha!" said the great man. "That little snipe Johnny Preston! Why, I know more about the shady side of Badminton than he could think up in a twelvemonth. What else is there?"

"Water-polo . . ."

"Water-polo! What do you mean, *water-polo*? Water-polo isn't a winter game. Who's going to go sloshing about after a rubber ball in October? Who wants to tread water for half-an-hour when the street lamps are lit at six o'clock and there's a smell of wood-smoke in the air, eh? Tell me that. At least," he added after a moment's reflection, "I don't think it's a winter game, is it?"

"I don't know, Mr. Carter."

"Don't know! You're fired. Take a week's salary and go—and send me somebody who knows something about water-polo on your way out. Wait though! There's hockey. What's wrong with hockey? I may be on to something there. WHAT IS WRONG," repeated Mr. Carter slowly, making a streamer of it in his mind, "WITH BRITISH HOCKEY?"

"Nothing," said Miss Wemyss, who always resented being fired by Mr. Carter.

"Nothing! Of course there's something wrong with hockey. Thousands of people play it. High time it was shown up. Here, send me in the Sports Editors—and the subs and reporters while you're about it . . . Now, Boys," he went on, when the motley collection of Old Blues, Thirteenth Men, Red Losers and contemptible anonymous Correspondents had filed athletically in, "I want a line on this hockey racket. What do you know?"

"Hockey?" asked the Wrestling Expert. "What's 'at'?"

"It's a ball-game," snapped Mr. Carter. "Who covers it around here, anyway?"

An insignificant little man in a blue suit came out of the filing cabinet in which he had been hiding. "I do, Mr. Carter."

"You, is it, Sticks? Well, what's wrong with the game? Dirty work in the circle? Corruption at headquarters, eh? Too many goalkeepers over seventy? Out with it."

"It's er—that is to say——" Sticks took a long pull at his moustache to steady himself. It was the Big Chance that comes to journalists only once in a lifetime and he knew it. "The game," he said in a low husky voice, "is honeycombed with professionalism—positively honeycombed."

"Literally honeycombed," corrected a sub automatically.

The Great Sportswriter rubbed his hands. "Ha!" he said, "I knew it. I knew we should get at the truth if we went on long enough. So once again the hydra-headed monster of professionalism rears its ugly—h'm, yes—Give me the facts, Sticks. I must have facts."

"Well, Mr. Carter, everybody knows that the tea-money allocated to their players by the big London clubs is out of all proportion to the value of the meals consumed. That's just an instance, of course."

"He's lying!" shouted a tall Net-Cord, who did a little detective-fiction reviewing on the side. "Look at the whites of his eyes. Now if you want scandalous mismanagement in the tennis-world——"

This outburst was the signal for a perfect babel of shouts and cries from the company, each editor striving desperately to press the claims of the game he held most dear.

"The doping of lacrosse-players . . ."

" . . . undetected hacking and pinching in the scrums . . ."

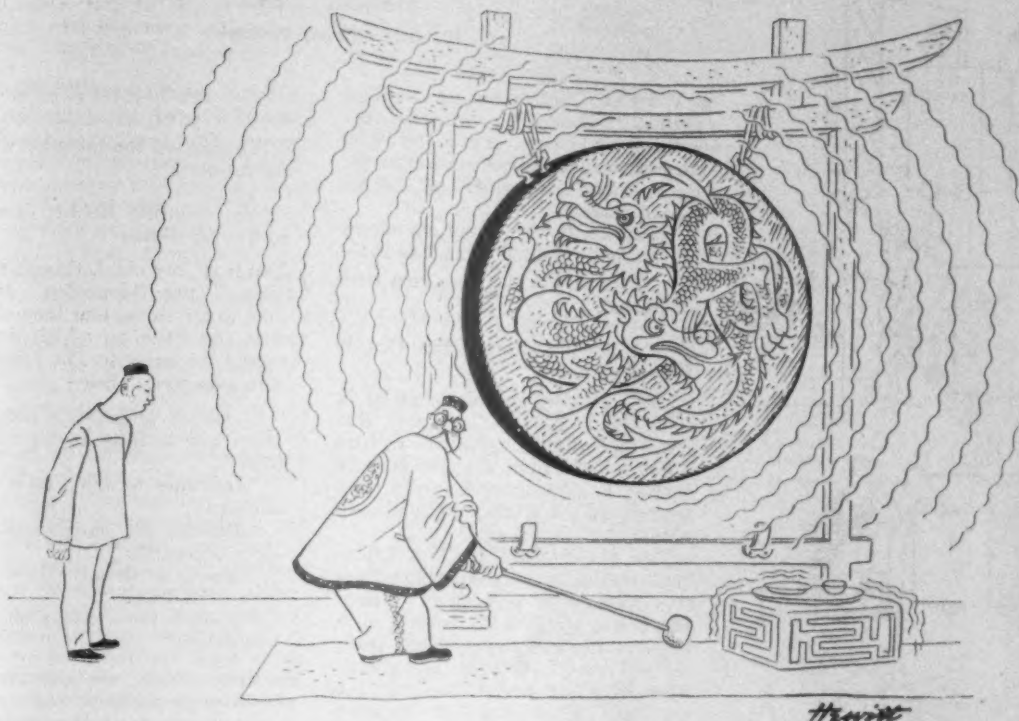
"I could name a director . . ."

" . . . apathy . . ."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen!" roared Mr. Carter. "Recollect



"I TELL 'IM WE WAS PLAYIN' FOOTER TER-NIGHT, AN' 'E TURNS UP TOGGED TER THE NINES FER CRICKET."



"YOU RANG, SIR?"

yourselves. I know you all have the best interests of British Sport at heart, but I cannot have this noise. Clear out, the lot of you!"

Alone again with his stenographer the Great Sportswriter passed a hand wearily across his face. "Take this," he said. "The spectre of bodyline bowling——"

"Spectre?" repeated Miss Wemyss, raising her delicate eyebrows. H. F. E.

Reflections in a Fish-tank

["One of the aspirations of the tropical fish keeper in general, and of the Guppy breeder in particular, is the production of a coloured female Guppy."—*The Aquarist and Pond-Keeper* (incorporating *The Reptilian Review*), Oct., 1938.]

WITH what stern tasks
Do you occupy your leisure?
You wash down the car?
You exercise the puppy?
Contemplate the fish-man's esoteric pleasure:
Colouring
The female
Guppy.

I'd like to be an aquarist by sticklebacks befriended:
My calm would be phenomenal, untouched by any crises:
I shouldn't be distracted if a holocaust impended
So long as I were left to my aquarian devices.

Deaf to the mutterings
Of war between the nations,
Heedless of the headlines in
The public prints,
The fish-man, calm amid successive Situations,
Tries to give his
Guppies
Tints.

I wish I were an aquarist and kept a little pond:
No threats would ever worry me, because I shouldn't
hear them:
I'd stare at my aquarium and not an inch beyond—
My little fish would need their boss continually near them.

O would there were a hint
Of aquarist's ambition
In the Great Big Stiff
Whose fault the whole mix-up is.
How nobly unaggressive is the fish-man's mission—
To brighten up
The hues of
Guppies!

If HITLER were an aquarist with fishes to amuse him,
Preoccupied with problems of their colour and their sex,
There mightn't be so much that one felt called on to refuse
him;
If only he would concentrate on fish instead of Czechs!
R. M.

Holiday Tasks

IV.—These Plaguy Participles



We had almost given up the fight against "following" as a disease that nothing could cure. But lately, with surprise, we heard a barbarian attempting to *defend* the horror; and that we cannot pass.

We speak, Bobby, of our old enemy the journalistic "following," as in:—

"Following a riot, two men were arrested,"

or

"Following dinner, the Guards Band played."

These are two recent examples in newspapers. All good men and true detest and disdain them; but if there is going to be some show of defence disdain is not enough. We must deploy; we must bring up our heavy artillery.

Now, the objection to this "following," Bobby, is not simply that there is a good short preposition "after," which, one would think, because of its brevity, any newspaper would prefer to "following." Here is that ghastly offence, an Unattached Participle. It is not, like "considering" or "concerning," an accepted preposition; it is not— But let us begin at the beginning and go slowly.

A gentleman writes to *The Times* thus:—

"SIR,—While sympathizing with Mr. Harrod's desire for action, his suggested remedy . . . is surely beginning at the wrong end."

That "sympathizing," as you know, Bobby, is like a stateless man, a runaway horse, an escaped balloon, a piece of wastepaper. It indicates vaguely the direction of the wind and that is all. What sympathizes with Mr. Harrod's desire for action must be Mr. Harrod's suggested remedy. The gentleman means, "I sympathize, but I think his remedy, etc." You know, we assume, Bobby, that this is a wicked sentence, and we will argue the point no more.

"But," you may reply indignantly, "can we not say

'Talking of condiments, where's the mustard?'

or

'Not counting Bobby, there will be five for dinner?'

You may, my child, though neither "talking" nor "counting" are attached to anything, and they seem to violate the rules by which we have censured the letter to *The Times*.

You may write also—

"Contrary to popular belief, the Moon has nothing to do with the tides."

"According to law, there is no liability."

"Allowing for exaggeration, the story is credible."

"Coming to details, three of the men were drunk."

"Owing to the weather, the match was drawn."

For these, Bobby, are idiomatic quasi-adverbs or prepositions, and are passed as such by the great FOWLER himself.

But you may *not* write—

"Following a riot, two men were arrested."

You may say—

"Considering all things, it was a lucky escape."

"Failing a miracle, the crops will be ruined."

"Regarding the future, nothing was said."

"Concerning your report, I have something to say."

For these participles were long ago admitted to the ranks of prepositions and need not be attached to nouns.

"Why, then," say the evil men, "may we not write—

'Following a riot, two men were arrested?'

DAVID LANGDON



"Following" had not reared its ugly head when the great FOWLER's book was printed; but he would without doubt have trodden on it as he trod on "due to." This is what he said:—

"It is to be remembered that there is a continual change going on by which certain participles or adjectives *acquire the character of prepositions or adverbs*, no longer needing the prop of a noun to cling to: we can say 'Roughly speaking, they are identical.' . . . The difficulty is to know when this development is complete. . . . In all such cases it is best to put off recognition."

The question is, then: Is the "development" of "following" complete?

No, no; a thousand times no!

Nor, if we can help it, will it ever be. For, as we privately maintain, unassisted by any authority, there is here a false analogy. The prepositions "concerning," "considering," "owing to," etc., have become idiomatic and good for reasons which "following" is unable to claim. Nearly always there has been an obvious ellipsis. They began life as respectable attached participles in properly constructed sentences; we have left out other words in those sentences, for convenience, and they remain. But it is quite easy to put those other words back. Thus—

"Considering all things, (we have to admit that) it was a lucky escape."

"Allowing for exaggeration, (I still think that) the story is credible."

"Coming to details, (I must tell you that) three of the men were drunk."

"(It was) owing to the weather (that) the match was drawn."

"Not counting Bobby, (I reckon that) there will be five for dinner."

"(If a decision is made) according to law, there is no liability."

"(Now that we are) talking of condiments, (may I ask) where is the mustard?"

But it is quite impossible in the same way to reconstruct a natural and sensible sentence from

"Following a riot, two men were arrested."

Well, if you don't believe us, try.

"(It was during the period) following a riot (that) two men were arrested."

"(Now that we are) following (the history of a) riot, (I must tell you that) two men were arrested."

We can even do something with

"Failing a miracle, the crops will be ruined."



"NOW I AIN'T ONE O' THEM BLOKES ALWAYS GOIN' BACK FOR TOOLS. COULD YOU LET ME HAVE A BIT O' LEAD PIPIN' AN' SOME HEMP?"

"(In the event of) a miracle failing (to happen), the crops will be ruined."

But there is no sense in

"(In the event of) a riot following two men were arrested."

The best we can do is—

"(An event) following a riot (was that) two men were arrested."

But why in the world should anyone say that when they can say

"Two men were arrested after a riot?"

* * * * *
In short, Bobby, there is nothing to

be said for this "following," and it must *never* be permitted, by confusion of thought, to pass itself off as an idiom of the same kind as "concerning," "not excepting," "considering" and the rest. It is not, like them, brevity-producing: it is verbose. It is not a simplicity: it is pompous. It is not, like them, the residue of a natural it is decent phrase: its origin is base, and artificial and affected. It is not, like them, a convenience: it serves no purpose at all. Only the ignorant and the degraded will continue to be guilty of it.

Cut this out and send it to your favourite daily.
A. P. H.



"NOW, AS YOU ARE ALL PROBABLY AWARE, MENTHROTP III. BELONGED TO THE ELEVENTH DYNASTY."

"Over Forty . . ." (September, 1938)

I WANT to sit down
To my lunch or my tea
And not have a crisis
Come bothering me.
As I eat, as I drink
Or blow cigarette rings,
I do not wish to think
Of political things.

Grossdeutschland's Führer, Sudeten and Czech,
Frankly, to me you're a pain in the neck.

Man wants but little,
They say, here below,
And I am contented
That it should be so.
Two thousand a year,
With a nice Mayfair flat
And a small country cottage
To rusticate at.

Riesengebirge, Teschen and such,
Ne'er did I think I should loathe you so much.

I can remember
When wars were confined

To limited circles;
And I didn't mind—
Till one of them broke
All the rules of restraint,
And made me a soldier,
Which, frankly, I ain't.

Cabinet Meeting, sensation and scare,
Must I encounter you everywhere?

How long ago is it
Since I set eyes on
Skies where no war-cloud
Obscured the horizon?
Sunday at Boulter's Lock,
Richmond or Kew,
In new straw and blazer
And nothing to do.

And now, I suppose I should be giving
thanks
That there's still room for young chaps like
me in the Tanks.

HITLER and HENLEIN, fomenters of riot,
Don't go too far with a chap who likes
quiet!



A GREAT MEDIATOR

John Bull. "I've known many Prime Ministers in my time, Sir, but never one who worked so hard for security in the face of such terrible odds."

Impressions of Parliament

Wednesday, September 28th.—When Parliament met this afternoon Members were expecting an historic speech from the PRIME MINISTER, but even he was not quite prepared for the dramatic finish given to it by the sudden turn of events.

The Commons was crammed. QUEEN MARY and the Duchess of KENT were in the SPEAKER'S Gallery, and for the first time a microphone stood on the table, connected with the Library of the Lords. Faces were grave, and in the air was that electric hush which at Westminster means that every Member is keyed far beyond the tension of such an ephemeral excitement as a Budget. 1914, in fact, was in the mind of all present.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN'S reception was as magnificent as he deserved for his inspired and tireless efforts to save Europe from war; and, after Captain MARGESSON, the Chief Whip, had moved the adjournment of the House, he began his résumé of the factors which had brought the quarrel of Czechoslovakia and Germany to the perilous point at which it stood.

After regretting that Article 19 of the Covenant, for the peaceful revision of treaties, had not been made use of by the League while there was still time, he described how, last July, the Government, wishing to be neither threatening nor unhelpful, had asked Lord RUNCIMAN to go to Prague on a mission of mediation between the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans. That this mission was finally unsuccessful was no discredit to Lord RUNCIMAN, to whom Mr. CHAMBERLAIN paid the warmest tribute; it contrived to keep open the negotiations between Dr. BENESH and Herr HENLEIN during most of the difficult period when the Sudeten claims, in spite of far-reaching concessions by the Czechs, were stiffening all the time, and it was not until the 14th September, when Herr HITLER'S speech at the Nuremberg Congress promising his support to a new Sudeten claim for self-determination stirred up serious rioting in the Sudetenland, from which Herr HENLEIN fled to Germany, that Lord RUNCIMAN felt he could do no more.

In the meantime, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN went on, the British Government were increasingly perturbed by the extensive military preparations which were going on in Germany and which began to prejudice the prospect of a peaceful outcome of the Czech problem. Sir NEVILLE HENDERSON, our Ambassador

in Berlin, was instructed to point out the dangers of this partial mobilisation and suggest it might be modified; but in his reply to these representations Herr VON RIBBENTROP declined to discuss the military measures and declared that British intervention in Prague had only served to make the Czechs more obstinate. After a visit to London Sir NEVILLE HENDERSON returned to Berlin with a plain warning that if France were obliged to stand with the Czechs against German aggression we should probably be with her, for the Government felt it was essential that before Nuremberg Herr HITLER should know the gravity of the situation; and for the same reason Dr. BENESH was persuaded to put forward the Fourth Plan, which embodied almost the whole of Herr HENLEIN'S original Carlsbad demands. Its publication was followed by the incident at Mährisch-Ostrau, serious but much exaggerated, which closed negotiations.

At Nuremberg the British Ambassador had made the Government's position perfectly clear to the leaders of the Nazi party, though not to Herr HITLER, whom it was thought wiser to leave alone; and when Herr HITLER in his final speech openly championed the Sudeten situation arose so critical that Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, as he told the House amid a burst of cheers, decided to go over to Germany himself and see what could be done. At his first Berchtesgaden conversation he very soon became aware, he said, that the situation was more acute than he had realised; looking back he had no doubt that his visit alone prevented an invasion for which everything was ready. Herr HITLER had declared that rather than brook delay in the fulfilment of the Sudeten claims he was prepared to risk a world war. When Mr. CHAMBERLAIN asked him why he had let him come so far for what seemed in that case to be waste of time, Herr HITLER had answered that if the British Government would accept the principle of self-determination then he would be ready to discuss ways and means. On this Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had undertaken to return and consult the Cabinet, and in the meantime Herr HITLER had promised to refrain from hostilities.

During the week which passed before the second visit to Germany, Lord RUNCIMAN had advised that Sudeten majorities should be given the right of self-determination at once, that an international commission should be invited to deal with the matter, and that an international force should keep order in the place of Czech troops and police. In view of the British promise to join in an international guarantee of

their new frontiers, the Czech Government unselfishly accepted the Anglo-French proposals without conditions on September 21st, and, in spite of complications arising from the demands of the Polish and Hungarian minorities in Czechoslovakia, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had flown to Godesberg the next day.

There he was bitterly disappointed by Herr HITLER'S attitude, and told him so in so many words. For the Chancellor now admitted he had never expected Mr. CHAMBERLAIN to get the principle of self-determination accepted, and rejected the Anglo-French plan. After an interchange of letters to clarify intentions and a final interview at which Herr HITLER expressed his wish for friendship with Britain and added that only one awkward question remained, the Colonies, which would not mean war, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN left with the German ultimatum to Czechoslovakia in his pocket.

In the few days which followed this had been turned down by the Czechs, and Herr HITLER had refused the British suggestion of a German-Czech conference which Sir HORACE WILSON had taken out to him on the 26th.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN was describing how, as a last effort, he had offered Herr HITLER a conference with Great Britain, France and Italy, and written personally to Signor MUSSOLINI to ask his help, when something happened which made everyone in the House hold his breath. Sir JOHN SIMON passed two papers along the table, and Mr. CHAMBERLAIN stopped speaking and read them very carefully. Then, to the immense relief of his audience, which cheered him wildly, he announced that his suggestion had been accepted and that Herr HITLER, who had postponed mobilisation for twenty-four hours, had invited him to go with M. DALADIER and Signor MUSSOLINI to Munich to-morrow morning for a conference.

The Party leaders briefly wished him luck, Mr. CHURCHILL and Mr. GREENWOOD shook him warmly by the hand, and, much, much happier, the House adjourned until Monday.

One-Way Traffic

"The bank hopes that within a week, when the order from the Madras High Court is made, it will be possible to resume normal business with the exception of payments which will remain suspended until further orders."—*Ceylon Daily News.*

"There is no denying the fact that the agriculturist in the Punjab, situated as he is at present, must have a second string to his bow to make both ends meet."

Civil and Military Gazette.

But then what becomes of the arrow?



"NICE, ISN'T IT? WE PICKED IT UP IN A PARK."

The Freelance Dog

SAID Terry Driscoll to me as the afternoon sun gilded the surface of the lake and the gnats played mazily above the motionless float, "Me Uncle Sham-us—the turf lie light on him!—who was the most knowledgable man in the county of Cork, used often to say that dogs had more brain to the square inch than anny other living creature—human beings not barred—and that if they'd the power of speech they'd be in contrhol of the world, with dog parliaments, dog ambassadors—ay, and even dog judges ready to put on the black cap if the occasion required the same. And to prove it he'd tell the story of Brian Boru, wan of the cleverest dogs in the histry of Ireland.

"Brian was a dog of ancestry—a lot of it. He was mostly sheep-dog, with a thrace of spaniel, a bit of fox-hound, a bit of retriever and just a taste of pointer, and he'd the artfulness of the whole lot put together.

"He was a masher of disguise. He'd ways of holding his head, puffing out

his neck, raising or dhrooping his tail, althering his walk and so on, so that unless he wanted to he didn't look like the same dog twice. Maybe he'd be snatch-ing a mouthful of meat off a butcher's block and running round the corner with it, but be the time the butcher was round the corner he'd see nothing but a retriever going about his business and the pointer had disappeared. I often read about the smash-and-grab raids in London, but for sstrategy the fellahs haven't the touch of Brian.

"But he soon got tired of living the life of a thrap, mainly because he'd no proper home where he could sleep at his layzure when he didn't feel like thraipsing round the sthreets—and maybe risking a butcher's cleaver or a wan-pound weight being thrun at him whenever he helped himself to somebody's stock-in-thrade.

"And seeing he was the grandest athor that ever stood on four feet, he'd look around till he'd find some agreeable family with a comfortable home and he'd adopt it. He'd play the part of a poor sthray and would rub agen the legs of the masher or the mistress and look at them with a famished eye until they'd take him

into the house and give him a meal. And wance he'd got a foot in the house he was there for life if he wanted it, because he was up to every thrick in the calendar. If annywan offered him a morsel of food he'd stand up on his hind-legs, just as if he was a gentleman born and bred, and if he came in from a muddy sthreet he'd wipe his feet—all four of them—on the mat, and the divil of a bark out of him at any time at a visitor, except maybe the postman.

"But he was a terrible hypocrite. You'd never believe it, but he used to find out what religion was the family he was living with, and nothing would satisfy me brave Brian but to go off on Sunday morning just in front of the family, and when they'd get to the church or chapel there'd be the fellah standing be the door and looking that pious you wouldn't have thought it strange if he'd a Prayer-Book tucked under wan of his fore-legs. Why, according to me uncle, there was wan family in the city of Cork who were nothing better than common atheists, and when Brian adopted them he was puzzled at first what to do about the Sunday mornings as the heathens

didn't attend anything and merely went for ordinary walks.

"Well, even that didn't baffle a dog like Brian. He'd start off for walks with them, and every time he passed a church, chapel, synagogue or the like he'd gallop up to the front-door and bark away like mad at it so that the family would say, 'That dog thinks for himself. We'll buy a better brand of dog-biscuit for him to keep up his health and strength on.'

"Now you might wonder what was at the back of all this deceit and thievery, and I'll explain it to you.

"Brian was wan of those restless dogs that are never satisfied with a good home, regular meals and a nice cosy place to sleep in. He'd get bored with a place after a month or two and he'd leave, but before going he'd always give himself an elegant farewell party. So he used to behave himself so well and to take only what was given to him that his owners for the time being would say to their friends, 'That's the honestest dog ever stepped out of a kennel. You could trust him with a whole larder and divil a thing he'd touch in it.' But the day would come when they'd leave something dainty, maybe a pound of sausages, a chicken, a pheasant or a delicate piece of steak unguarded, and Brian would wait his chance and then he'd elope with the article to a little wood outside the town where he'd go on his holidays for a few days and live like a fighting-cock on the grub he'd brought as luggage. After that he'd drift back to Cork and prowl around till he'd find another family living in a different part of the town and adopt it the way he did the others. Why, he must have been the pet dog of a dozen of the comfortablest families in Cork in his time.

"But, like the rest of us, a dog is apt to get spoiled if things always go right for him, and the day came when Brian by his own carelessness destroyed the grand business he'd worked up for himself. It was like this.

"He'd just come back from a long honeymoon with a brace of partridges—they were strung together when he grabbed them and one of them kept shreeling along the ground as he got away with the brace to his country resort—and he was looking about for a new home when he came to Charles Stewart Parnell Sthreet, which is off George's Sthreet, near the post-office. The name was new to him, he not knowing that it had been given only a few weeks before, the old name of the place having been Spencer Sthreet.

"So me bucko marches along, and

after making himself look like a spaniel—he hadn't used that disguise for more than a year—he picks out a comfortable house and marches in as bold as a lion to adopt it.

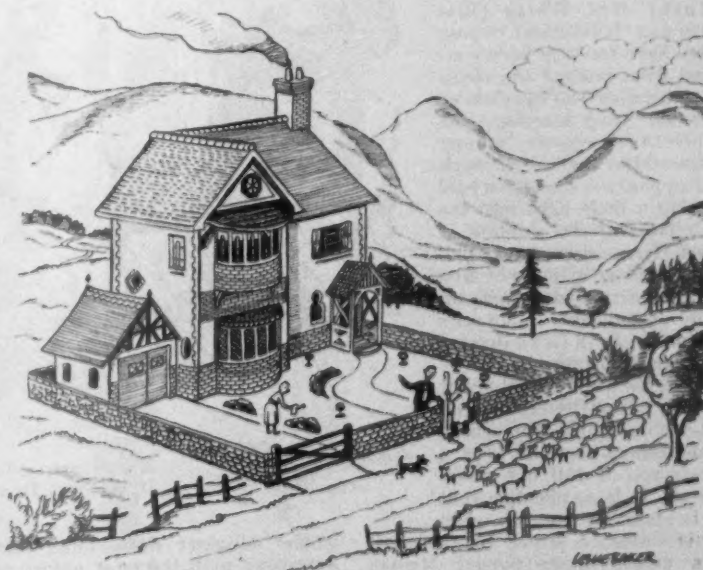
"And there he met his Waterloo—no less than. For the house was an old home of his where he'd skedaddled with a darling roasting turkey they'd been saving up for dinner to the parish priest on the Sunday.

"The man of the house caught sight of Brian and let out an oath and a yell that would raise the dead, then he reached for a whip and made a dart for the dog. And Brian ran for all he was worth, and he was so terrified at the vengeful face of the man that he never looked back, and be all accounts, if the thruth were known, that dog is running yet."

In Aid of the Wire and Poultry Fund

It would be nicer riding Bedevere
At our gymkhana here
If he were sometimes facing
In the direction of the racing
And not pretending
That he presumes the point of bending
Is to bend back
The posts until they crack.
Also some dreadful man
Called Stan,

Riding a really coarse
Dishevelled horse
In braces,
Beats us in all the races,
And Bedevere has made the programme
late
By jumping underneath a gate
And entering the tea-tent with the
wreck
Entwined about his neck.
Under a waning sun
The obstacles are done,
Though Maud, endeavouring to save
Her wave,
Still vainly through her veil,
Pursues the apple in its pail,
And Mrs. Moffat still hangs fire,
Coyly suspended in a motor-tyro.
Meanwhile the music draws
To its last pause,
Though goodness knows the rightful
heir
To the last chair,
Since Phoebe has the feet
But Stan the larger complement of seat.
Now dimly through the night
The end's in sight.
Dear Lady Dash
Doles out the cash;
And somebody with bandy legs
Vociferously begs
That he
And two small boys and me
And the wrong end of Bedevere
Should give her ladyship a rousing
cheer.



"WE MOVED IT STONE BY STONE FROM 26, ATHELSTAN ROAD, S.W.19."

At the Play

"THE CORN IS GREEN" (DUCHESS)

Here is something which, blessedly remote from the lunatic rumblings of war, satisfies the mind and is thoroughly good entertainment into the bargain. Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS, who is also his own leading man, has written and produced it; I think it is every bit as gripping a play as his *Night Must Fall*, and gets further, since it is not an adventure in the macabre but a straightforward story in which the characters have the broader basis of sanity. It is a simple story, but Mr. WILLIAMS tells it with rare theatrical skill and builds up the half-tragic relationship which is its central theme with so nice an eye for proportion that it dominates but never strains the fabric of the play. He looks into the human head from odd angles, but how clearly he seems to see what is going on inside!

Miss Moffat (Miss SYBIL THORNDIKE) is a woman of means and education who at the end of the last century wears men's collars and insists on being treated as a complete adult and not a mere simpering candidate for marriage. Warmly supported in all she does by her faithful *Mrs. Watty* (Miss KATHLEEN HARRISON), whose fingers have recently been converted from picking and stealing to banging the cymbals at Salvation Army meetings, she settles in a remote mining village and in the face of much local opposition starts a school to bring a little light into the black faces of the children of Wales. Her assistants are the palpitating village spinster of Miss CHRISTINE SILVER and the beautifully Calvinistical lawyer's clerk of Mr. JOHN GLYN-JONES; the opposition springs chiefly from the *Squire* (Mr. FREDERICK LLOYD), a prettily-caricatured coal-owning Blimp who speaks of his miners as if he kept a private zoo of dull but useful animals. It is so effective that she is about to pack up when she is suddenly struck by the work of a young miner named *Morgan Evans* (Mr. EMLYN WILLIAMS) and decides to carry on and concentrate on polishing his genius.

He leaves the mine and she clothes, feeds and teaches him, not only how to think but to behave. He is so desperately keen to learn that he meekly accepts the unsympathetic severity into which she is driven by her horror

cedes it to demand that he should marry her and legitimise her baby. *Miss Moffat* pleads with her, and eventually she agrees to give up the idea of marriage with *Evans* (she has a fine flash masher up her sleeve) in return for *Miss Moffat's* promise to adopt the baby. But that is not the end of it, for *Evans*, a decent youth, is determined to do what he considers his duty; and in the finest passage of the play *Miss Moffat* has to persuade him that this is to develop his gifts for the good of his fellows and not to tie himself up to a worthless baggage who will no sooner have got him back into the mine, and drinking, than she will abandon him. And she has also to persuade him—poor brave *Miss Moffat*—that since she is to adopt his child he must never come near her again. He is not ungrateful, he is in fact very much moved, but he sees she is right.

Miss THORNDIKE makes *Miss Moffat* a really big person, a woman of authentic vision, capable of cutting through any depth of convention and prejudice to a goal she feels is worth while. It is a memorable performance, in particular for the way *Miss Moffat* gradually drops her guard; and it is matched in quality by that of Mr. WILLIAMS, whose pitboy begins with a kind of dumb numbness and grows slowly in awareness of what his mind contains until the moment when a visit to Oxford releases him completely so that for the first time he is able to talk naturally to *Miss Moffat*. The indication of this process is brilliantly contrived, both in the writing and the acting.

All the minor characters in the play are intensely alive. *Miss HARRISON* gives a grand slice of Cockney comedy, *Miss JARDINE's* transformation of the wayward child into a sophisticated hussy is an excellent study, and Mr. LLOYD's *Squire*, induced to back *Evans* only as a sporting flutter, is a perfect representation of a familiar figure still to be seen at quite a number of village fêtes in the loamier corners of the countryside. ERIC.



THE SCHOOLMARM'S PET

Miss Moffat DAME SYBIL THORNDIKE
Morgan Evans MR. EMLYN WILLIAMS

of any sloppiness coming between them. Only once he breaks out against the harshness of her régime, and on the rebound against it seduces *Mrs. Watty's*



SOFT SOAP

The Squire MR. FREDERICK LLOYD
Miss Moffat DAME SYBIL THORNDIKE

willing daughter *Bessie* (Miss BETTY JARDINE), with the most unfortunate results. When the telegram comes to tell him he has won a first-class scholarship to Oxford, *Bessie* just pre-

"GOOD-BYE, MR. CHIPS"
(SHAFTESBURY)

Boys in their early teens, although we understand they had many of the best parts in Elizabethan days, are the class most seldom seen on the modern stage; and it is an abiding weakness of most plays in a school setting that the real life of a place is only represented to us in the form of noises OFF. Not so the admirable producers of the stage version of *Good-bye, Mr. Chips*. They shirk nothing. They show us class-rooms with real classes, and boys who are not men acting but boys acting themselves and doing it admirably.

No old boy will go to this play without recognising that this is the real thing, that here, for instance, are the genuine episodes and incidents of prep. What is doubly admirable is that this fullness of treatment goes right back in time, for we are with *Mr. Chips* through the sixty-eight years which he spends at Brookfield. We see successive generations of boys, subtly different and essentially the same, and catch in their talk the echoes of the larger world of their day. Through it all there moves *Mr. LESLIE BANKS*, first as the diffident new master, and then as the decent solid housemaster, and finally as the venerable and established institution.

From the nature of the story, which is the triumph of the character realised through innumerable little unremembered acts, we cannot expect to see on the stage the process by which *Mr. Chips* achieves his special niche in the affection of Brookfield; but we watch and see how, as the years pass, the fine niche becomes more and more obvious. *Mr. BANKS* grows old very gracefully. The proportions of a human life are so carefully reduced and compressed into three hours that the spectator is reminded of those nature films which show the growth and flowering of a plant, the process of months, in a few minutes. The result has rather the effect of an old morality play, but it is a morality play that is—apart from one moment of tragedy—a cheerful performance, altogether un-mawkish and filled all through with a delightful humour.

Thus nothing can be better than the first casual appear-

ance of Miss GILLIAN LIND in the masters' common-room in July, 1878, as a forward young thing, and her appearance, ten years later, as *Mrs. Upton*, wife of one of the masters, and a rose with many thorns. The masters



DISAPPROVAL OF NEW IDEAS

Mrs. Upton . . . MISS GILLIAN LIND
Katherine . . . MISS CONSTANCE CUMMINGS

are very realistic, notably *Mr. Blake* (Mr. MICHAEL SHEPLEY) and *Mr. Temple* (Mr. RONALD SIMPSON), who catch exactly the flavour of the last century. Miss CONSTANCE CUMMINGS is only with us and *Mr. Chips* in half the Second Act, although there are glimpses of her in the First and Third, but she manages to make an impression that remains.

Because Brookfield is an old foundation it has families whose boys appear generation after generation, and of these families the chief is the *Colleys*, and Mr. SHEPLEY doubles his earlier part in the masters' common-room with an appearance as *Sir Richard Colley*, a buffer very like *Dick Bultitude* visiting his own school in his father's body. He proves a staunch friend to *Mr. Chips* under the least lovely of the successive headmasters, and he makes a speech at the farewell dinner which is almost painful in its exact reproduction of a man floundering, desiring to touch and yet afraid to touch the deeper chords at a memorable farewell gathering.

Among the boys Mr. CLIVE BAXTER as *Webb*, and Mr. NIGEL STOCK as *Colley*, stand out particularly for their mastery of the art of conversation with grown-up people, and particularly with masters. They throw out their questions and observations as though they were throwing chance stones, to watch the ripples and the effect, and in the hope, if not of getting a rise, at any rate of deferring instruction. The instruction thus deferred is in general Latin, for it is one of *Mr. Chips'* great adornments that Latin is his subject, and Latin with the old pronunciation at that. His classes and the school are in the full old tradition, with *Cæsar* in pride of place. It is a great achievement to have put such a public school on the stage like this. D. W.



MR. CHIPS FROM TIME TO TIME

Mr. Chips MR. LESLIE BANKS

Disguise?

"They took with them an Irish terrier dog and a black and brown sheep dog—both pets. Both were wearing horn-rimmed glasses."
Manchester Paper.

"Even linen sheets, once they are aired, are the better for storage in a dark, dry, coal cupboard until their turn for use comes again."
Sunderland Paper.

Though not the whiter.

Colonial Problem



"THE BEAUTY OF THIS MACKINTOSH-CAPE—"



"IS THAT IT FOLDS UP—"



"INTO LITERALLY—"



"NOTHING."

DARLING JOAN,—Hot it may be in India, but cheer yourself up, because we are perhaps going to give it away to Germany, and then you can come home and restore your complexion going for nice long walks in the rain.

Talking about rain, have you read a marvellous book called *It Was Raining?* All about India, and everyone thinks it quite fascinating except the people who've been there, and they say "Pshaw! the fellow was only in the country six months." And no one can say now I'm ignorant about India because far from it; I know quite well that Pshaw is the capital of a province, and I know what U.P. stands for, so that's one U.P. to me, and as for Quetta, I could find my way blindfold from the Staff College to the Club on account of people always describing that landslide to me, although you're dead right, I've never been east of Monte Carlo.

Well, apparently Hitler now says he wants his colonies back and some more too. How sublime if we stop having an Empire—what heaven! It's terribly difficult to discover which bits he had before, but do you remember in the Lower Fourth we had an atlas with bits of Africa marked brown on it—a bit on the right and a bit on the left lower down? Very dating to have seen such an atlas, but we did, and those were his bits.

Then Guy says there was a bit called Cameroons, which I always thought was a regiment half Scotch and half black, but no. And a bit called Togoland. And they'd a little piece of China like we've got Hong-Kong and the Japanese Shanghai and the Americans Anna-Mei-Wong. And one or two of those islands in the Pacific that come in Somerset Maugham where people retire and paint pictures and look rather affected having dinner in sarongs.

Well, you'd have thought—wouldn't you? we'd all say—"How perfect! Do have them, and for heaven's sake take Palestine too and see if you can't sort it out." Because I know so well what you've been through over your complexion, and I've suffered a good deal too in a lesser way because I really was devoted to Paul, but not to marry Gary Cooper would I set up house in the White Nile Province Sudan, would you? Because no one can pretend that Imperial life is a ball of fire, what with being shot at and not shooting back because of the Opposition, and being seasick, and retiring to live in Cheltenham to educate three mouldy children

you've practically never seen, and answering your own front-door. Yes, I know all about Drake and Clive, etc., but I very privately think they were all sub-normal, and to me the guilt is clean off the gingerbread.

I had a thought at dinner the other night, which was, why not leave all those malarial places to their own devices, because anyway the local inhabitants haven't to be seasick getting there on account of being there already. I was just going to say so to Uncle Charles when as good luck would have it the parlourmaid dropped the fish, so, although the carpet was ruined, it's an ill wind because in the hurly-burly I called to mind that Uncle C. had been Governor of some place for five years, during which it ran with blood, but anyway it made him dead nuts on the sun never setting, and he would just have thought How Red and cut me out of his will for ever.

Well, as I keep crying in the wilderness, if anyone's so beany as to want colonies, let them. Not that we've really much to offer, because most of ours belong to themselves, except when there's a coronation and they want a front seat, or when someone near them builds a large navy and they come hurrying warmly back into the fold. Which isn't surprising, because all we do with our colonies is to send people to them that it's a bore to have about at home, like black sheep to Australia and confirmed co-respondents to Kenya. And if the Germans want to go to Papua and Samoa and be infested with sharks, why not? Self-expression is everything, and if that is their idea of the Good Life, well, let them.

But there is one objection, though perhaps you'll laugh at me for being so ideal, but it seems to me unfair and not cricket to let the Germans in for all that without their really knowing what it's like. Imagine giving anybody even a tiny bit of China and making them go there and organise it just now. Probably you'll think I'm being a bit far-fetched and Christian, but I do really think the Germans went through quite enough in the war and we should concentrate on forgiving and forgetting, instead of retaliating by sending them back to those awful places and making them spend heaps of money they haven't got buying sun-helmets and Palm Beach suits. So I absolutely agree with letting them stay peacefully in Europe and giving them a nice bit of the Danube Basin to make up.



"I 'APPEN TO KNOW THE PRIME MINISTER'S JOB AIN'T ALL DARTS AND BITTER."

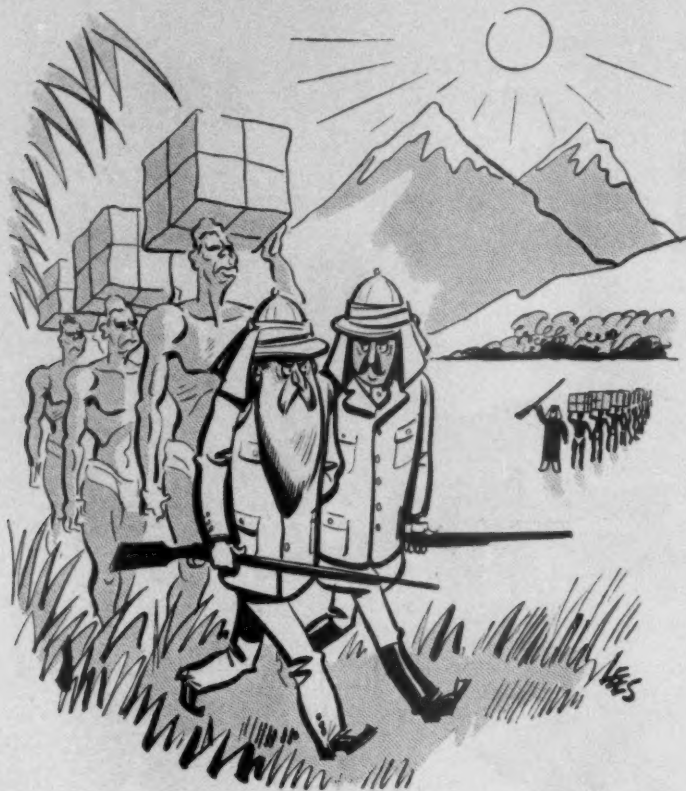
The Stand-by

In older days when stirred to lift his voice
The poet, free to sing as nature bade him,
Was wont to take the seasons, Spring for choice,
But all were good, and very well they paid him;
Roused to a nobler height he tackled war,
Arms and the man, heroic deeds and knightly,
Or, failing these, he seldom failed to score
With love, perhaps the best if treated rightly.

But what of war? The gust he drew therefrom
Is dead as mud; it has nor pomp nor glitter;
He that would feed on such deserves a bomb
On his fat head before his first weak twitter.

Who sings of love? Our youth of modern mind
Hold it mere slush; it may be that in some way
They have some far-off feelings of the kind
But, if so, they express them in a rum way.

Yes, that stern theme, so popular since Troy,
Is to the poet's use for ever broken,
And even love, the Muse's lasting joy,
Is just as flat, nay flatter, more by token.
Yet, bards, arise and cudgel not your brains
For new strange matter; pull yourselves together;
Reflect, though much is taken much remains;
All is not lost as long as you've the weather.
DUM-DUM.



"DON'T LOOK. I THINK IT'S THAT FELLOW LIVINGSTONE."

The Oldest Inhabitant

ALTHOUGH I had been warned that Mr. Samuel Joseph Wedge did not like visitors, he received me cordially in his cottage at Morton-cum-Wedlock. He was seated in front of a fire, and his intelligent eyes regarded me critically as I took a chair facing him. Many years of manual labour had left their marks on his hands and his face, which was deeply lined. His coat was lined too, but that was because he felt the cold.

"I represent *The Daily Hour*, Mr. Wedge," I began cheerfully, "and I would be grateful if you could recall some of your memories of bygone days for the benefit of our readers. I promise I will not tire you."

"Ah—h," smiled Mr. Wedge, "ye woan't toire me. Oi loikes it."

"That's splendid. I understand

you are a hundred-and-fourteen years old. Is that right?"

"'Oo tole ye?" he replied with a trace of asperity. "You 'aven't bin a-talking to Mary, 'ave ye?"

"Dear me, no—put that right out of your head. If you prefer not to discuss your age I will not press you. Still, you know, a man of your age is a matter of national interest."

"Ah—h," he said.

"Well now, I wonder if you can tell me something about your early days—any little incident you can remember?"

Mr. Wedge became thoughtful, and I could see he was searching his mind. "Harses wur harses them days—they wur," he said at last.

"I am sure they were. And they could run too, couldn't they?" I ventured.

"Ah—h," he replied non-committally.

"Tell me—what was your first job?"

"Me first job?"

"That's it—the very first bit of work you ever did."

"Not me."

"But you must have started some time; perhaps I can help you to recall it. I expect your father was a farmer. You remember him, of course?"

"Doan't Oi—that Oi doan't!"

"And what did he do for a living?"

"'E wur a thirsty man, 'e wur."

"We all get thirsty at times," I said, smiling. "But what did he do when he wasn't thirsty?"

"'E drank, 'e did."

"I doubt whether he lived as long as you have."

It was an unfortunate remark. Mr. Wedge looked at me in a hard manner and made an effort to rise, his stick in his hand.

"Now, *please*, Mr. Wedge. We won't talk about it any more. I'm sorry if—"

"Ye needn't be," he interrupted, settling down again.

"I expect you worked with your father for a time. Have you always been a farmer?"

"I ain't tellin' ye."

"Very well, Mr. Wedge. Perhaps you will tell me to what you attribute your wonderful age."

"Eatin' an' livin'. Oi eats anything, Oi do."

"Have you lived here all your life?"

"Oi'm not dead yet."

"No, no, of course not. When did you come here, then?"

"Ah—h," he replied, "that's arskin', that is."

"I would like to help you, Mr. Wedge, if I can. You see, I'm afraid what you've told me so far won't be of much interest to my paper."

"Oi don't want no 'elp, young man."

"All right. Was there any outstanding happening in your life that you can tell me about?"

He was silent for a while, but something was stirring within him. Then his face lit up and he leaned towards me. Dropping his voice he said, "Oi've bin to sea, Oi 'ave."

"Come, now, that's better. And so you haven't been a farmer after all. D' you know, I thought there was a salty smack about you—a sort of star-board and port look. I suppose you started in sail?"

"That Oi didn't."

"In steam, then?"

"Nor that neither."

"When did you go to sea, Mr. Wedge?"

"On'y once."

"That must have been a long time ago."

"Ah—h!"

"And when did you leave the sea?"

"Oi didn't. Oi wur pulled out, Oi wur."



"MIND YOU, THAT AIN'T GOT THE 3.30 WINNER IN IT, SIR."

"Pulled out? You mean you fell in?"

"Oi wur pulled out, Oi tell ye."

"But you must have fallen in to have been pulled out?"

"Oo said so?"

"I'm afraid I'm upsetting you, Mr. Wedge, but I should like to get this clear. Will you tell me how you got into the sea? Shipwreck perhaps?"

"Noa. I warked in—wi' the rest on 'em."

"This is most extraordinary. How many others were there?"

"Underds."

"And were they pulled out too?"

"Noa, they swim out, they did."

"I suppose one of the sailors helped you out? Was that it?"

"Oi never said nothin' about sailors. Oi tell ye Oi've on'y bin to sea once—and that wur at Blackpool."

I looked at him and he was smiling. I laughed too, glad at finding him in such good spirits at last. "You know, Mr. Wedge, nobody enjoys a joke better than I. But I can't go back to my paper empty-handed. Surely there

is something more vital you can remember? You haven't said anything about your family. What do they consist of?"

"Boys and girls, most'y."

"Seriously, now, Mr. Wedge. You're not helping me a bit. How do you spend your days? How do you amuse yourself?"

Mr. Wedge struggled to his feet. "Ah—h," he replied, "Oi can tell ye that. What Oi loikes best is showin' noospaper-men the door; they're too down proiyn' for Oi."



"I DON'T THINK IT WOULD BE A BAD IDEA IF WE KEPT A CARBON COPY OF EACH LETTER WE SEND OUT AND HAD THEM PUT IN SOME SORT OF FILE OR SOMETHING."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

No Sae Bonnie

THE Englishman's well-known tenderness for lost causes and forlorn hopes—which persists in fiction long after his notion of comfort has ousted it from the realms of fact—has lent popularity to many Lives of BONNIE PRINCE CHARLIE and, one suspects, will continue to do so. *Prince Charles Edward and the Forty-Five* (HALE, 10/6) reads as though it were written before the latest publication of the relevant papers at Windsor. There is no complete bibliography, but it seems impossible that so much anti-Irish bias could have survived a perusal of O'SULLIVAN's diary, the most important document of the '45 that has recently come to light. For the rest, Miss WINIFRED DUKE has produced a compact and readable story of the Prince's life before the landing at Moidart, and a detailed account of the rising and its aftermath up to his sailing for France. Her real hero, as Sir HUGH WALPOLE remarks in a laudatory preface, is Lord GEORGE MURRAY. She puts in a good word for "Butcher" CUMBERLAND. As regards CHARLES EDWARD himself, she relates with considerable gusto the rare occasions when contemporary witnesses were less than kind. She is "an onlooker who refuses to be bewitched."

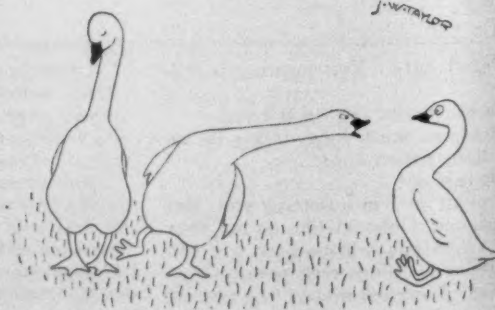
St. Francis Up To Date

It is said that a royal personage wishing to ingratiate himself with a proletarian audience was so unwise as to adopt their dialect, and that the verdict of his scandalised lieges, expressed with disgust as soon as his back was turned, was, "E doesn't 'arf speak corse." Something of this disappointment in a regal theme too colloquially handled

will, one fears, attend *In the Steps of St. Francis* (RICH AND COWAN, 8/6), an enthusiastic, industrious and only too hearty addition to a popular series. In seeking to rewrite the life of the Poverello in modern terms Mr. ERNEST RAYMOND soundly maintains that the Saint's profession of poverty and love of elemental things were Christianity's most Christlike protest against urban greed and materialism. Unluckily he wanders out of his human way—a way which delightfully entails retracing his hero's vestiges in Italy, Egypt and Palestine—to elucidate after his own fashion the mysticism of FRANCIS. He has entirely missed what TENNYSON called the "Catholic wholeness" of the Saint; and his portrait of CLARE as a "golden girl" contrasts rather shockingly with contemporary originals. There can be nothing but praise for his charming photographs of Franciscan sites.

Siegfried's Saga

We have had the memoirs of the fox-hunting man, of the infantry officer, and *Sherston's Progress*; now Mr. SIEGFRIED SASSOON gives us *The Old Century* (FABER AND FABER, 8/6), throwing in for good measure the seven years more that carry us on to his twenty-first birthday. Clearly, therefore, the end is not necessarily yet. We add hastily that this author has our leave to continue so long as he keeps up to the present standard. For *The Old Century* makes very good reading. It begins with the childhood of the second of three small boys in a country house in Kent, and concludes (for the time being) with the budding poet—he had just had a small volume printed by the Athenæum Press—trying on TENNYSON's old black hat and cloak in the studio of his uncle, HAMO THORNYCROFT. And in between we read of his life at home with nurse or governess or tutor; at his preparatory school near Sevenoaks; at Marlborough and Cambridge (which, like so many other celebrities, he left without going through the "formality of taking a degree"). And scattered through the pages are vignettes of many friends and relations and other interesting characters. The THORNYCROFTS of course bulk largely: was not the author's mother sister to the famous sculptor and the ingenious engineer who started the works at Chiswick? And there are also delightful sketches of many tutors and masters, not forgetting the remarkable Mr. GOULD of Marlborough, and the "Boss" of the cramming establishment where the youthful poet was prepared for Cambridge. Here and there too we are permitted glimpses of a few early poems: everywhere there is the candid and careful self-analysis that has marked all his autobiographical works.



"TWO'S COMPANY; THREE'S A GAGGLE."



A DILEMMA

Station-Master. "NOW THEN! LOOK ALIVE WITH THEY DOUGS! WHERE ARE YOU——"

Over-driven Porter. "HOOTS! THEY'VE A' EATEN THEIR TUCK'ES, AN' DINNA KEN FA THE'RE GAEN TAE!"

Charles Keene, October 8th, 1881.

Ambassadors for Peace

Perhaps rather too many of our contemporaries are engaged in writing their autobiographies, but there is every excuse for Miss VERA BRITAIN to feel that some new chapters from hers will be welcome. Superficially *Thrice a Stranger* (GOLLANCZ, 10/6) is an account of three visits to America since the War, the last in 1937. She went out first full of prejudices, ready to dislike all things un-English, and left, after her latest lecture-tour, with longing backward glances towards a country she has come to love, to admire and to regard as one of the best hopes of a difficult world. Some readers will not feel entire sympathy with her, for instance, when she bemoans the lot of the woman hindered by family cares from answering the call to write fiction, and perhaps on more important points. Her very readable book, however, must surely do something to strengthen our friendliness for America and above all must convince every honest reader that to work in some way, perhaps

not in Miss BRITAIN's own, for active peace—not mere avoidance of war—is the duty and privilege of every thinking man and woman to-day.

Actor, Soldier, Airman

Lives of actors are not always very absorbing, but *Robert Loraine*, by WINIFRED LORAINÉ (COLLINS, 10/6), is an exception. LORAINÉ, as revealed in this book, was a far more complex character than would appear to those who knew him as a well-graced actor or, additionally, as a pleasant club acquaintance. His soldiering as a yeoman in South Africa was not in itself remarkable, though he did fight the sergeant-major; what was uncommon was that, having been rocketed into stardom on the West-End stage, he suddenly threw the whole thing up to enlist. He was known to be a keen airman, but that is very different from the wild connection between a ham-fisted pioneer with a daily crash and a most Draconic Colonel of the Flying Corps.

But it was as an actor that he became most familiar to the public. He had much success, both artistic and financial, and there were bitter intervals of idleness and disappointment. Now and then in some great part he suddenly showed himself to be a great actor. He was acclaimed as being at the very top. But somehow the position was never consolidated. He must have been a difficult man to deal with, and that may have had something to do with it. It is a tragic story, that of his later days, both professionally and as regards his home life. As Mrs. LORRAINE says, their lives were always melodrama. At one time, no sweeter man to his family ever existed; at another, knocking twice at his door would send him out of the house for days. There was no help for it. Something had gone wrong with his star.

Far Horizons

Every year seems to bring new recruits to the increasing band of small craft owners who seek and find satisfaction for their love of travel and adventure in sailing the seas of the world, either alone or with one or two kindred spirits and generally in vessels not too well equipped and never intended for such ambitious undertakings. Mr. DWIGHT LONG's thirty-two-foot ketch, whose voyage from Seattle to London by the Eastern route he describes under the title *Sailing All Seas in the "Idle Hour"* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 9/6), was no exception to the rule. She was originally designed for use in the inland waterways of British Columbia, and her only ocean trip before Mr. LONG acquired her nearly brought her career to a premature end. Moreover, to quote her owner: "I started out with a pocket watch, as I could not afford to buy even a second-hand chronometer." However, the little ship proved admirably seaworthy, and maritime disasters were very few, though the voyage was not without tragedy in the death of the Tahitian boy who shared with the author so many of the dangers and discomforts inseparable from the small boat Odyssey. Mr. LONG writes of what he saw and experienced both pleasantly and intelligently, and the text is accompanied by a number of excellent photographs. But why is a picture of some quite obvious gaiassas provided with the caption "Arab dhows on the Nile"?

Mud in Georgia

Journeyman (SECKER AND WARBURG, 7/6) tells how an amorous revivalist descended like a plague on a small town

in the wilds of America and, having seduced its women, outdrunk its men and whipped them all with hell-fire sermons into an animal orgy of confessional hysteria, cleared out in a car won in a crap game with loaded dice. It is a squalid little book for which there is not much to be said; apparently fearful lest any should deem his work too bright and innocent, its author, Mr. ERSKINE CALDWELL, has thrown in a boy of six suffering from hereditary disease just to make up the weight. The style is the clipped realism which a few modern American writers use very effectively but which can so easily become pretentious and dull, twin traps which Mr.

CALDWELL does not escape. There is strength in the way he presents the character of the preacher, and charm in his description of a bored farmer finding contentment in gazing at the sky through a crack in a barn. But oh, what a dreary little book!

Not Guilty

Mr. CLIFFORD WITTING is not at his happiest in dealing with *The Case of the Michaelmas Goose* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), and the reason lies in the fact that no one could be seriously alarmed about the fate of pleasant though foolish *Peter Grey*. *Peter*, after the sudden death of his disreputably despicable cousin, behaved so ineptly that he was arrested for murder; but with *Inspector Charlton* of the C.I.D. in love with the prisoner's sister no lethal consequences could reasonably be expected to follow this arrest. Mr. WITTING finishes with a neat surprise, and apart from the rather colourless *Peter*, his characters, both criminal and otherwise, are firmly drawn. But he must curb his tendency to interrupt

the run of his stories by relating irrelevant anecdotes.

Bibliophiles

Raids on libraries seem to be coming into fashion among writers of thrilling fiction, and although nothing so vulgar as snatching and running took place in *Comes a Stranger* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), Mr. E. R. PUNSHON sees to it that the *Kayne* famous collection of books causes a rich crop of envy, hatred and malice. Sometimes assisted but occasionally impeded by his fiancée, *Detective-Sergeant Bobby Owen* does steady and intelligent work in unravelling a really intricate PUNSHON mystery. Here he is rather more militant than usual. The *Chief Constable* plays a dignified and useful part in a tale that has to be followed closely if its subtleties are to be fully appreciated.



"I TELL YOU, FROBISHER, THERE'S A SMALL FORTUNE AWAITING THE MAN WHO CAN TURN RAGS AND WASTE-PAPER INTO GOLD INGOTS."

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Charivaria

A WISE man, we are told, does not choose his wife nowadays for her looks. But he gets them all the same when he comes in from the vegetable plot without wiping his boots.

★ ★ ★

Britain Prepares for the Worst

"Articles that have shown increased sales during the international crisis are cigarettes, trousers at night he put mouse-traps in the policies."—*North-Country Paper*.

★ ★ ★

A South American naturalist reports that he has discovered a species of worm that has two distinct arms. This enables it to give the correct signal when it turns.

★ ★ ★

Horse-Sense

"ZEBRA HIDES
STEADY SUPPLY NEEDED FOR USE AS LEATHER"
Paisley Daily Express.

★ ★ ★

A golfer complains that while playing on a Herefordshire course a cow picked up his ball with its mouth and devoured it. She should of course have dropped it over her left shoulder.

★ ★ ★



Doctors have discovered a man with two hearts who is inclined to be of a rather gloomy disposition. One for each boot.

★ ★ ★

An explorer says that most savages are considerate husbands. Cannibals, for instance, never expect their wives to get in anything extra when they bring a friend home for dinner.



"What is wrong with life to-day?" asks an essayist. A common complaint seems to be that it is not true to the cinema.

★ ★ ★

Peace With Honour

"The chief event of the past week at the Zoo . . . has been the arrival of a fine orang utan. The animal comes from Munich and has been exchanged against a young stallion Przewalski's Wild Horse from Whipnade."—*The Times*.

★ ★ ★

A man accused of being drunk and disorderly stated in court that he was half Scotch. He didn't say whether the other half was soda.

★ ★ ★

According to a critic an actor always knows when the audience is not in sympathy with him. A little "bird" tells him.

★ ★ ★



It is suggested that international treaties should in future be written on linen. We see no advantage. They could be sent to a laundry to be torn up.

★ ★ ★

" . . . Endure with wisdom the Ministers of the Crown, the Imperial Court of Parliament and all other Parliaments of the Empire, and those who are set in authority over us."

From an Order of Service.

Amen.

★ ★ ★

It has been stated that a well-known Hollywood actor gets through twenty-five shirts in a week. While we are old-fashioned enough to take ours off the same end as we put them on.



"I DON'T RIGHTLY KNOW WHO THEY WAS, LADY, BUT I THINK THEY WAS ARMY PEOPLE."

Audition

THE door of the office was flung open and a stout man strutted in and took up his position in front of Mr. Kibitzer's desk. Removing his hat and casting it proudly to the floor, he raised and lowered his eyebrows several times as if to make sure that they were in working order and then suddenly began to chant—

"Me name is Gorbals. On the champion 'ills
Me father feeds 'is clock."

Silence. Mr. Kibitzer looked about at the papers on his desk and at length consulted the young woman at his side: "Girlie, would this be Sammy, the Pride of the West?"

"No, Mr. Kibitzer," his secretary replied in a low voice. "This is Sardanapalus, the Great Little Wonder."

She indicated this proud title on the list in front of him. Mr. Kibitzer grunted and chewed his cigar for a moment; then he pointed with his thumb at a large red letter A on a slip of paper stuck into the corner of his blotting-pad. The secretary immediately smiled kindly at the stout man and said "Thank you. We'll let you know in due course."

"I got a novelty juggling act too," announced the performer, wriggling about as he produced three large china plates from pockets in his check suit. He held them ex-

pectantly, waiting for the word "Go." It came, bearing the wrong kind of significance, and Mr. Kibitzer said "Next!"

His secretary pressed a bell and in came an earnest-looking pair: a tall, thin, angular woman and a shorter thin man. They stopped before the desk and stood facing each other in attitudes suggesting that they were about to fight. They cleared their throats. Then the woman said very loudly and distinctly, "When you're bee-keeping everything gets covered with beeswax and very slippery."

"Really?" her partner said in a totally uninterested tone.

"The other day," the woman went on, sniffing, "I sent away to what used to be Austria for a queen. The bee they produce there is a very gentle bee—gentle as a fly. They're good honey getters too; the only thing against them is, the queens are very prolific."

Mr. Kibitzer was frowning incredulously at his list. He murmured out of the side of his mouth to his secretary, "Don't tell me that this is the Little Ball of Fire and the Big Ball of Fire?"

She shook her head and pointed in silence to the first item, "The Scientifics." He said "Oh." Then he indicated the letter A again, and when The Scientifics had gone he said "Next!"

A quiet little man sidled diffidently round the door and carefully closed it after him, testing with one hand the way

it fitted into the door-frame. Then he slowly took off his rain-coat, staring impassively at a point about halfway up the wall. Without the slightest warning he then suddenly began a strenuous tap-dance, very little of which was audible owing to the thickness of the carpet. When this came to an end he stood with one foot pointed outwards, produced a pitch-pipe from his pocket and blew a plaintive note, and began to sing at the top of his voice:—

"Now *my* wife once fell down a drain,
An' wh'n'er mother went by
The lodger took a bit o' cheese——"

Mr. Kibitzer made a cross on the list and pointed with his thumb to the familiar letter.

The next turn consisted of three pretty girls, all dressed alike.

"Ah, these'll be the Whassname Sisters," said Mr. Kibitzer, leaning back hopefully. "I like close harmony. You want the gramophone, girls?"

They shook their heads, smiling. Then, after rapidly taking off their coats and hats and piling them with their other belongings on a chair in the corner, they stood motionless for a few seconds until one of them shouted "Hup!"

Mr. Kibitzer jumped, but not before the girls. He perceived that they were now in a small pyramid in the middle of the room. From unexpected positions in this eminence their faces beamed at him proudly for an instant before at the word "Hop!" the pyramid disintegrated. Mr. Kibitzer opened his mouth and then shut it again suddenly,

flinching, as at another "Hup!" they arranged themselves in a precarious-looking shape resembling that of a broken hour-glass.

He raised one hand anxiously; they took no notice, and, dropping from their perches on the first girl, the second and third began to turn cartwheels all round her as she stood beaming and pointing upwards first with one hand, then with the other.

Mr. Kibitzer had had his thumb against the A for some time before his secretary managed to pass on the message it conveyed; but at length the three girls, still beaming prettily, withdrew.

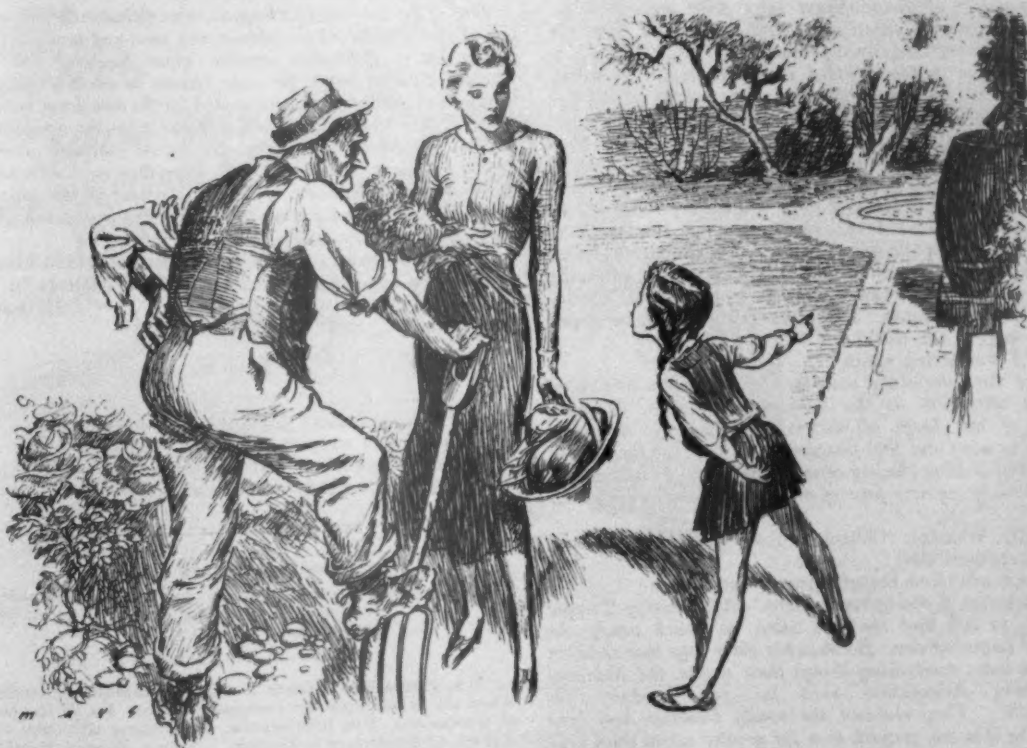
"Who were they?" Mr. Kibitzer inquired, panting. "No, never mind, never mind. Next!"

The next two turns—a man who rode in backwards on a miniature tricycle, and a fat lady with a trained seal—were summarily disposed of. Then entered a man in a dark uniform with leggings. First he took off his cap and brushed up his moustache with the peak of it; then he twisted his nose from side to side; then from a pocket he took a small comb with which he scratched his head. All the time he was slowly approaching Mr. Kibitzer, on whom he had fixed a gloomy stare. Mr. Kibitzer watched these preliminaries with apprehension, wondering how loud a performance this was to be. At length the man spoke.

"I'm Mr. Coodle's chauffeur, Sir, and he's waiting outside to take you to lunch."

Mr. Kibitzer released a shuddering breath. "We'll go out the back way," he said, getting up.

R. M.



"MUMMY, YOU KNOW BABY'S NECK—WELL, HE'S IN THE POND UP TO IT!"

Peace after Storm

"Dear Sir" (begins my correspondent)—"We thought you might be interested in making a news-item of OCTOBER NATIONAL DOUGHNUT MONTH. The reason for this is that DOUGHNUTS are news. Many of the papers throughout the States and Canada feature OCTOBER NATIONAL DOUGHNUT MONTH, as there are always so many interesting things to write about."

I think he means "so many interesting things to write about doughnuts," not, as you might suppose, about the world in general. He reminds me, and I face the memory with shame, that I have been writing for some time about far less interesting things.

About Herr Hitler, for instance. More than a month ago I said in doggerel rhyme—

*"And so long as the bullying speeches
And the gun and the tank at the door
And the bluff that the preacher preaches
May get him a good deal more,
I should think there will be no war."*

I stand by that. The well-deserved chorus of praise for Mr. Chamberlain rises, I think, from every heart because our Prime Minister finally convinced Herr Hitler that he could gain more for himself by absorbing the Czechs with bluster than by destroying them with bombs: and he has got that gain. But it seemed fairly clear to me all the time that this is what would occur. Why did I labour to stress the obvious when a problem far more important, far more worthy of "featuring" loomed already through the mist of autumn?

"The Romance of the doughnut is of great scope and interest" (my correspondent goes on, writing, if you will believe me, from Doughnut House, N.W.9). "Doughnuts were first known and mentioned in the Bible, in Leviticus. Through the ages and in history one reads how at great feasts and celebrations bread fried in oil was served."

There is no explicit mention of doughnuts in my own Bible in Leviticus, and I think my correspondent must be referring not to the Bible but to that now almost more popular compilation, *Mein Kampf*. "All day long" (does not the passage go?) "I sat brooding about the future of the great German people, and eating doughnut after doughnut, until there suddenly sprang into my mind the fiery conviction that France must be annihilated. France does not like doughnuts. Therefore France must be wiped from the map of the world."

Or am I wandering again?

"One of the interesting machines in operation and causing great attraction at the Empire Exhibition, Glasgow, was one of our large all-electric, all-automatic doughnut machines turning out 960 doughnuts an hour at the United Co-operative Baking Society Stand. The United Co-operative Baking Society requires four of our machines to supply their demands."

Has Mr. Winston Churchill, has even Mr. Harold Nicolson, realised that?

But there are even better things to come—

"In 'Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm' little Shirley Temple was made to say that she has eaten so much candy she cannot eat anything else. Because her elder says that children should eat more nourishing things than sweets, the National Confectioners Association sued the film producer for \$500,000.00. They claimed the candy business had been damaged by that one remark to a far greater extent than even a half-million dollars could cover."

"Click Magazine" recently gave over three pages to showing

the tremendous influence that movies and movie stars have on the women's apparel business.

"Now that the stars of Hollywood have come out for doughnuts in a big way we can expect to see staggering new sales figures. For over 12,000,000 people a day attend the 18,000 motion picture houses in the United States."

"... It is hard to keep stars away from our doughnuts."

These are moving words that may well cause us to ponder. What is to be our own national policy towards the doughnut, the *boule de Berlin*, as the French so charmingly call it? Surely the day may dawn when we realise that civilization has in fact been saved for the doughnut-minded, and so soon as the leaders of the Great Powers, Totalitarian and Democratic alike, on both sides of the Atlantic can meet on a common basis of mutual understanding in some central palace of delicatessen, prepared to discuss their differences in the same spirit as that in which they are now discussing the rare and refreshing fruits of Munich— But don't listen to me, listen to my correspondent again—

"Two years ago, during a Beauty Contest at New Orleans, it was flashed through every newspaper in the land that doughnuts were definitely found not to be fattening... and yet" (he continues) "by actual caloric count for the same weight they have three times as much caloric content as meat."

Do not these words herald a time when the vast resources of food in the world will be more evenly distributed, and the inexpensive, nourishing yet not fattening doughnut will find equal favour in the palaces of the rich and the humble tenements of the proletariat? Let those who are still doubting, who are not already doughnut-conscious ask themselves why, and let them study this final quotation from my correspondent's letter:—

"One of the interesting things in connection with the gathering of all the different inventions and pieces of machinery, we found that a Bohemian woman, whose husband had died, patented a turner-hand, for some reason or another unknown to us, which was just what we wanted for the doughnut machine. Without this turner-hand, which turns over the doughnut so that it is fried on both sides, the entire machine would be nearly worthless. Needless to say, since they were on a royalty for a number of years, with the success of the machines becoming greater and greater each year, this Bohemian woman has become independent."

So that not even the now peacefully redivided kingdom of Bohemia can be said to have existed entirely in vain.

EVOC.

Dawn

THE waking earth the sun's caress receives,
The early siren at the factory hoots,
The sparrows hop and twitter in the eaves—
Thank God they don't wear boots!

Kindness Always Pays

"... a small incendiary bomb... may be carefully picked up, if it is in... a dangerous place, and carried... to a place of safety."—A. R. P. Handbook.

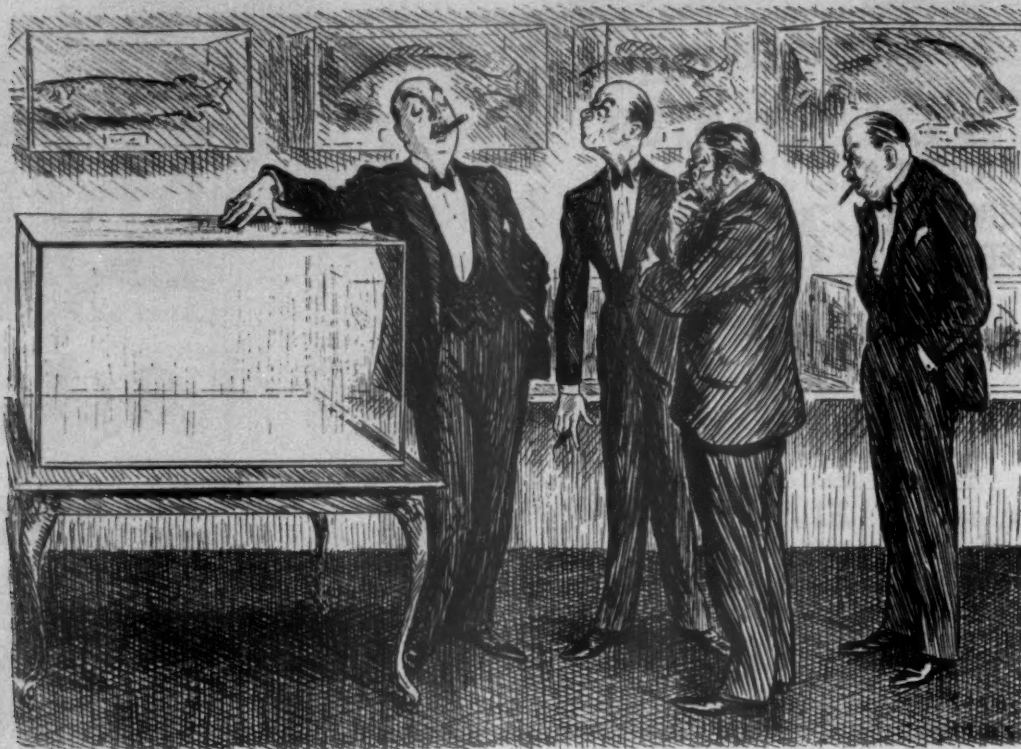
"Mrs. Kruttschnitt spends her life in outposts of civilisation. When she is not with her husband at Mount Isa, in the far west of Queensland, Mrs. Kruttschnitt is travelling with him to New Guinea, to America, or to London."—*Sydney Morning Herald*.

Don't forget your elephant-gun next time you're here, Mrs. Kruttschnitt.



GET IT SETTLED

"What are *you* going to do in the Great Peace, Daddy?"



"YES, THAT'S THE ONE THAT GOT AWAY."

Letters to Officialdom

XXIV.—Re Peace

To the Prime Minister, 10, Downing Street, London, S.W.1.

DEAR SIR,—I wish to dedicate to you this little ode. Please do not acknowledge it as my wife knows nothing of it and might resent its implications.

Oh, Mr. Chamberlain, why did you do it?
 Why did you do this magnificent thing?
 All of us married men haply shall rue it
 As soon as our wives have decided to sling
 Disparaging words at the lot of us,
 Saying, "How proud Mrs. Chamberlain feels!"
 And "What do *you* do—except get on a bus,
 And play in the City, and joke over meals?
 Why not do more? *I* want to feel proud of you!
 Why don't *you* sacrifice something instead?"
 And all we can answer is, "Well, it's all due
 To Chamberlain, dear. We'd have done what
 you said,

We'd have sacrificed *all*; but *now*—well, *we*
can't!

And it's all Mr. Chamberlain's doing."

So why, Mr. Chamberlain, *nom de ma tante*!
 Why did you do this impossible thing?

I expect you will be amazed to hear that I wrote this poem in less than ten minutes, without even using a rhyming dictionary. I once wrote an ode to Shakespeare, but my emotion then did not inspire such spontaneity, and I took nearly half-an-hour over it.

Yours to command, Sir,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—I hope you will come and fish in the Rum one day. The 10.5 from Paddington gets to Rumborough at 11.58. I'm afraid the nearest aerodrome is ten miles away, at Upalong.

Policy

It is not true, as unkind tongues have whispered, that we call ourselves the Shakespeare Society because that is the only playwright with whose name most of our members are intimately acquainted. Far from it. We nearly all know, for instance, of Noel Coward and Edgar Wallace and Ian Hay, while many of us can talk quite fluently about obscurer dramatists such as Shaw and Barrie.

We pride ourselves on providing culture as well as entertainment, and the Committee takes its responsibilities very seriously indeed. It met last week for the first time this season, round coffee at Miss Bracket's, and after we had all said how pleased we were to see each other again, Watling, who is Chairman, rattled his teaspoon in his saucer. "Well," he said, "here we are!"

"Yes," Mrs. Myrtle agreed, looking round her in vapid surprise. "Are we all here?"

We counted up and decided we were. We always are for the first meeting.

"Then the first thing," said Watling briskly, "is to decide on our policy."

"But I thought we took one out last year," said Mrs. Myrtle. "Don't you remember the man with the beard who came?"

"Not," Watling explained patiently, "the insurance policy. We've got to decide what we're going to do this winter."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Myrtle, appreciating the subtle distinction.

Councillor Candle, who is the society's President, looked masterful. "Why, that's easy," he said. "We're going to act."

"Quite," Watling agreed. "But what?"

"Ah!" Mrs. Myrtle said again, getting a grip on things.

"I've been wondering," said the Musical Director boldly, "whether we might try an opera?"

The Musical Director's function at present is to wind up the gramophone during the intervals, and no doubt he feels that this hardly affords him sufficient scope for his talents.

"Operas," Miss Bracket suggested timidly, "are hardly plays, are they? I think we might do something really big, though. Don't you think we might attempt *Cavalcade*, Mr. Watling?"

"*Cavalcade*?" Councillor Candle inquired suspiciously.

"Yes; Noel Coward's play, you know."

"Oh, him!" said Councillor Candle somewhat cryptically.

"What I think," Jim Gregg remarked firmly, "is that we ought to have a play that isn't all words. Something with a shipwreck in it, for instance, with plenty of thunder and lightning."

Jim Gregg does the Effects.

"Not on my stage!" the Stage Manager declared emphatically.

"A musical-comedy wouldn't be all words," the Musical Director insinuated hopefully. "And it's more of a play than an opera is."

"I've got an idea," Miss Bracket announced. "I think we might ask Mr. Priestley to write a play for us. He seems to find it quite easy, and I'm sure he wouldn't mind. Something cosmic, you know."

"Hear, hear!" Councillor Candle said violently and unexpectedly. "I'm all for something comic," he added, thereby sabotaging the good impression he had caused.

Heron, who had been looking uncomfortable for some time, made a noise like a man who is going to choke, and we all looked at him apprehensively. Heron works in a bank and once went to Paris for a holiday, so we regard him as rather an intellectual. "As a matter of fact," he observed shyly, "I've written a play myself."

"How clever of you!" cried Miss Bracket. "I've been trying to ever so long, but somehow I can never think of anything for the characters to say."

"It's rather a novelty," Heron expounded. "The last Act comes first and the First Act comes last. In the First Act—"

"Is that," Watling interrupted, "the First Act that comes first or the First Act that comes last?"

Heron looked bewildered. "It doesn't really matter," he said lamely after a pause.

"Ah, well," Councillor Candle de-

cided heartily, "we might as well produce the lad's play. If we don't nobody else will."

"You couldn't," the Musical Director suggested artfully, "put a few songs in it, I suppose?"

"Oh, while I remember!" Mrs. Myrtle broke in—"would you mind not playing quite such *loud* records in the intervals, please? The last time you played the '1812 Overture' I couldn't hear a word Mrs. Baker was saying to me."

"Or we could try *Murder in the Cathedral* for a change," Heron ventured, covering the Musical Director's eclipse.

"Oh, not another of those *nasty* detective stories!" Mrs. Myrtle begged passionately.

After this the discussion rather tailed away. Mrs. Myrtle's preference for a Tudor costume-play was found to be prompted by the fact that her little boy had recently worn a Tudor suit as a page-boy at a wedding, and Heron's exposition of the plot of his play grew somewhat tedious.

At a quarter to ten Watling looked at his watch and said he thought he'd better be going, a suggestion which was promptly followed by the Stage Manager, Jim Gregg, Councillor Candle and the Musical Director.

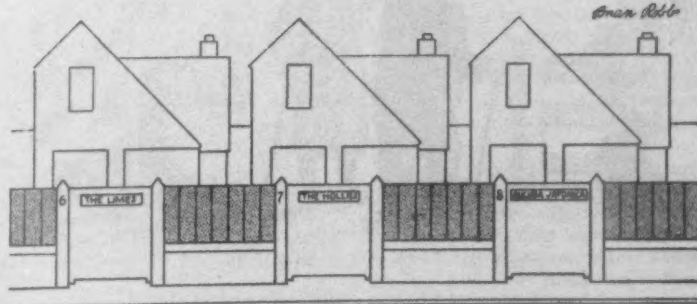
"But what," I said, "shall I put in the minutes?"

Watling paused to think. "Oh, anything you like," he decided. "I suggest, ladies and gentlemen, that now that we've decided on the main lines of our policy we might leave the actual choice of the plays to our secretary."

"Seconded," said Councillor Candle, who was getting thirsty.

"Then I suppose," said Watling, "we can leave it to you?"

I nodded. I knew they would. They always do.



On Telling the Way

If there is anything which earns my admiration it is the way some people—men, not women—are able to tell you the way without the slightest hesitation.

"You go straight down here until you come to the robots, then turn right, take the second on the left, and when you come to the 'Green Man' cut straight across the road as though you were going down the arterial road, but instead of going down the arterial road you take the road where it says 'No Thoroughfare,' then you turn left again, past the robots, and it's the third on your right. You can't miss it."

Just pat like that. It is really, when you come to think of it, one of the triumphs of the human intellect. Here is a man, peacefully pursuing his way, meditating perhaps over his wife and little ones or maybe upon the results of last night's tourney at the "Green Man," when suddenly bursts upon him a total stranger asking the way to, say, Tin Pan Alley.

Confronted with such a situation I myself would become hopelessly paralysed. My mind would refuse to grapple with a problem so unexpectedly presented. I would falter and stutter,

perhaps say "I don't know." Not so the gentleman aforementioned. His intellect rises swiftly and brilliantly to the situation, he marshals his forces together in one sweeping movement, and in a split second he has got my whole route to Tin Pan Alley mapped out for me.

It is quite true that all I can remember of his injunctions is "Go straight down here until you come to the robots," and to that I cling like grim death, knowing it will get me one stage nearer to Tin Pan Alley anyway. But it's the ease with which he does it that is so astonishing.

Personally, I am no match for people who want to know the way, even if it's a way that I've been traversing myself for years. When a person comes right at me in the street wearing that half-furtive look which proclaims that he is going to ask me the way, I at once go all panicky. My heart sinks and my brain becomes even more numb than usual. Desperately I seek around for a way of escape. If there is no traffic about and I don't have to wait on the kerb I cross the street and ignore his "Excuse me" or the mute and pathetic appeal in his eyes.

If that is not possible, then I glare at him balefully and march quickly and resolutely by. This counter-stroke so disconcerts him that usually the

poor wretch waits until he can button-hole someone else.

But now and again my bluff is called and I am forced to see the thing out. "Tin Pan Alley?" I echo thoughtfully but vaguely. "Let me see; it's somewhere round here, I know." He looks at me with a polite but doubtful smile. Already he is seized with suspicion that I am about to lead him astray.

Only yesterday I had been in Tin Pan Alley, but how I ever got there the Lord only knows. My scattered wits make a feeble effort to gather together. There is an agonised period of silence during which he watches my furrowing brows with outward gratitude but with secret alarm. Poor devil, he can't get away now.

"Oh, yes," I burst out with false jauntiness. "Tin Pan Alley: I knew I knew it. Well now, you go right down here—"

"Past the robots?"

"Robots? Which robots?"

"There's some robot traffic-lights further down the street," he says patiently. "Can't you see them?"

A doubt begins to undermine my self-confidence, but I fight it down bravely.

"Oh, yes," I say, "but you go right past the robots, and then you turn left—"

"Where?"

"Eh?"

"Where do you turn left?"

"Why—er—at the bottom of the road."

"I see. And what then?"

"Why—er—there you are. You're at Tin Pan Alley then."

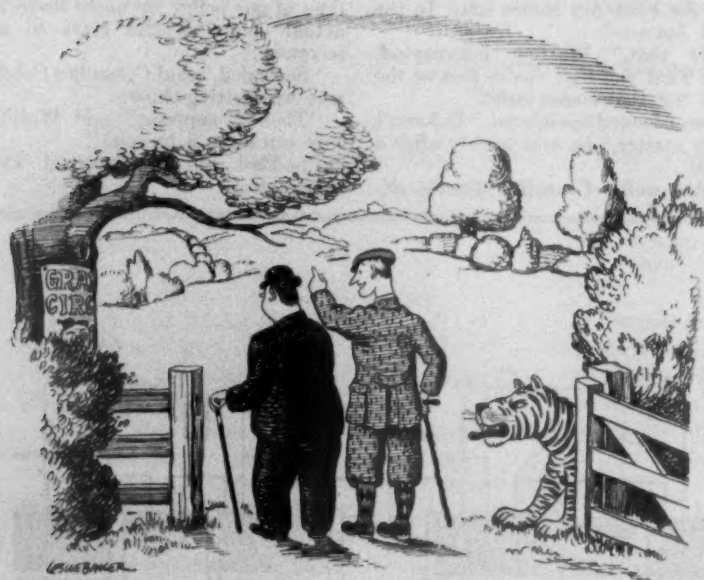
"Thanks, thanks," he says effusively, although he can't stop his eyes saying "You can't fool me, you ham."

He starts off down the road and I plunge in the opposite direction, anxious not to be anywhere in the vicinity when the showdown comes. On the point of darting down a side-street I give a nervous glance back. He has reached the robots and stopped, obviously to ask the way again. At the same moment he casts a look in my direction and sees I am watching him.

There is something tragic in his faltering footsteps past the robots and away from Tin Pan Alley. . . .

The Witness

NOT being a motorist or any other sort of criminal, I have never had any dealings with police courts. It was therefore a shock to me when my friend Sympton rang me up last week and asked me to be present next morning at Dirk Street Court to tell the



"YES, A WEEK AGO WE HAD THE CIRCUS IN THIS FIELD."

magistrate that he (Simpson) was a man of the highest respectability quite incapable of throwing an egg at a Fascist speaker.

We Tokewhistles are not the sort to let down our friends in the hour of need, and I promised to appear and do what was required. It might perhaps be stretching truth to say that Simpson was a man of the highest respectability, but, as I told my conscience, except for the grace of God there goes Augustus Tokewhistle, and if I had happened to have an egg in my pocket on certain occasions I should undoubtedly have hurled it. Providence had left me eggless, which made it all the more incumbent on me to help Simpson.

I did not fully realise what I had undertaken until I asked my charlady if she knew where Dirk Street Police Court lay.

"It's on the left as you go up Pottle Road," she said. "I'm sorry to hear you are in trouble, Mr. Tokewhistle."

I assured her that I was merely going there on behalf of a friend, but she went on dusting my desk as if she retained her own opinion.

I hailed a taxi. "Dirk Street Police Court," I said in a whisper.

"Where?"

"Dirk Street Police Court," I shouted. Passers-by turned and looked at me with interest, and somebody murmured audibly that they supposed most murderers gave themselves up sooner or later. Another remarked that I did not look the murdering type but that it was probably something slinking, like forgery.

The taxi-driver opened the door for me in a rather stand-offish way, as if he felt that he had no right to pass judgment, but he was not too keen on filling his cab with criminals.

At Dirk Street I passed into the police court after a hasty glance round to make sure that none of my friends was about, and knocked at a window marked "Inquiries." After five minutes spent in convincing the officer that I was not a gentleman named Spike Somebody come to surrender his bail, his manner, which had been friendly and genial, became austere and aloof. "If you are not Spike," he seemed to imply, "we don't want you." He told me to go back into the street and enter by the main doors when the court opened.

At last the court opened and I was wafted among a great mass of semi-criminals like myself into a large vestibule. Most of them seemed to be regular customers and sat down outside the door of the probation officer or court missionary. A single policeman

was deep in conversation with a man like a pickpocket, and when I tried to ask him what I ought to do next he froze me with a glance. There seemed no way of getting any service from anybody. I waited there for what seemed like hours, with horrid visions that Simpson might already be hanged. I flirted with the idea of knocking a policeman's hat off so that somebody would take some notice of me.

Then Simpson himself strolled in, smiling all over his face.

"What on earth are you doing here?" he said. "Found out at last, eh?"

I reminded him coldly that he had

asked me to come along and tell lies to save him from a felon's grave.

He laughed. "Oh," he said, "I should have let you know, I suppose, but I didn't think you'd take it seriously when I asked you to come. The charge was withdrawn last night. It wasn't my egg that hit the speaker at all—quite a differently shaped egg altogether."

I just restrained myself from assaulting Simpson. I really couldn't risk it because there is nobody who would go as far as swearing that I am highly respectable. Simpson pointed this out, saying that one must draw the line somewhere.



"NAICE WEATHER FOR ART, DEARIE!"

Not Even Kindly Meant

THIS is a most annoying letter I have had from Harper.

I did not ask him to read my play. Few people can write plays, fewer still can read them. And people like Harper, who can do neither, should wait till people's plays are produced and then pay, like anybody else, to go and see them, and not try to find out all the surprises in advance by picking up spare copies of the script and saying: "Do you mind if I read this, old man? I'm naturally interested in the theatre; and if it is any good I know people who might help you to get it on."

If it is any good I can get it on myself. I shall only want his help if it isn't. And he doesn't know anybody anyway, though he says it so confidently that you have a sneaky feeling that for once the sanctimonious ass might.

Naturally you dive at his hand and argue with him, and try to get the play back, saying *nobody* has read it yet, and there are alterations to make, but he goes off with it just the same, and now he has written back like this, if you please—

"I will return the copy of the play as soon as I find an envelope large enough to contain it. It won't go in this one, and I have rather damaged the edges, I'm afraid, in trying to make it go in by folding. Frankly, old man, it is not a play I should go out of my way to see. Though that alone would not prevent it being a success, because I never do like popular plays. In particular, I don't like your last line of all. It smacks of the last line of Lonsdale's "Aren't We All?" And it reminds me of the Curtain to Act I. of the unfinished play, which I wrote myself some years ago, and which goes like this:

Joan. Try not to worry too much.
Good-night. [She goes out.

Bill. Good-night. (He laughs

bitterly.) I should call it a perfectly foul night.

QUICK CURTAIN.

Subconscious plagiarism, no doubt, but there it is."

Isn't a letter like that infuriating? I don't know what he means by "not going out of his way to see it." Either he would be on his way, or he would be on his way somewhere else. And if, having started somewhere else, he passed the theatre and dropped in, he would still not be going out of his way; whilst, if he changed his mind and turned off his route in order to see my play, he would from that moment be on his way. And why should anyone go out of his way to see a play which he could see more easily by going the right way? To say he would not go out of his way to see it simply means, to my mind, that he would behave in a normal manner for once and not like a congenital lunatic.

As for his last line, it is nothing like mine. He can only have got it from a comic strip. Feeble in the extreme, and I do detest people who can't discuss anything of mine without bringing in something of theirs, which is like it but better. Everyone I know, who hears that I have written a play, wants me to know that he once had a brilliant idea, which he entirely used up in writing an Act I. For the rest of his life he has been unable to think of any other ideas to provide Acts II. and III., which alone would complete the darned thing; and I can't imagine how many drawers in writing-desks contain these treasured First Acts, which give people the right to talk in this superior way to others who at least have finished all three and had them typed out.

If Harper doesn't like popular successes, why read my play at all? He could only remark that it might succeed because he didn't like it. Or might fail because he did, which would be equally annoying either way.

Actually I have not seen Lonsdale's *Aren't We All?* so I do not know his last line. I can't see why the fact that mine is reminiscent of it weakens my play. It must mean it is as good as Lonsdale's. And as for Harper's own curtain, what do you think of it? No, really?

Fancy putting in his stage directions like that.

"She goes out."

That's a *faux pas* if ever there was one.

You are supposed to say *how* people go out.

Exit Joan by door L.C., which means "left centre," in case there are two doors and she bumps into someone coming in. Or in case, next time she enters, she does so by mistake from a room into which she did not go. If there is no door, you say she exits by window, chimney, or pillar of fire. The way Harper puts it, she goes out by turning down the wick, like an oil-lamp.

"He laughs bitterly." How typically amateurish! Too many stage directions altogether, leaving nothing to the imagination of the actor, which annoys the actor very much because, if he doesn't know by the end of Act I. that he is supposed to be bitter, he ought to be kicked out and somebody else brought in. It would be quite enough if Harper were to explain when he draws up his *Dramatis Personae*, or Characters in the Order of Their Appearance (which is done before you write the play)—

BILL A sourpuss

Then "QUICK CURTAIN." What does that mean?

Is the fireproof thing to crash down on to Bill's neck just as he is bowing? Or does Harper want the velvet one dropped and looped up seven or eight times, very fast, while Bill runs into the wings and back again, cannoning off an unseen post each time, and trying to be on while the curtain is up, and off while it's down, which very few acrobatic dancers manage, usually because they haven't tipped the stage-hand.

Well, he hasn't sent me much to work on, but it will do. I am going to sit down and write Harper a most stinking condemnation of his curtain to Act I., urging him never in any circumstances to write Acts II. and III., and to send back my play immediately, posted flat.

A Supine Attitude

"CHELSEA DECIDE ON THEIR BACKS."
Heading in "Evening Standard."

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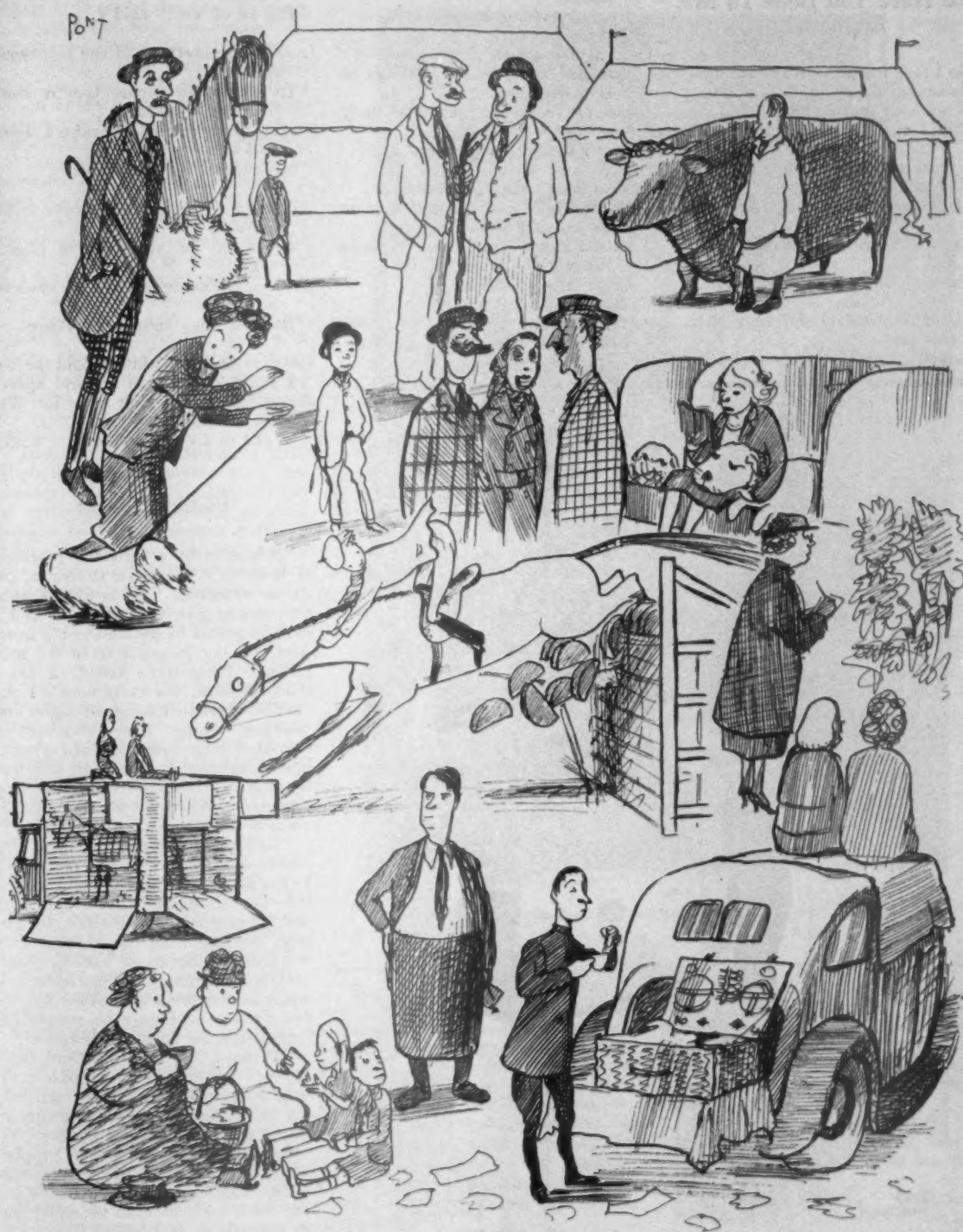
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WAR



THE COUNTY SHOW

What Have You Done To Me, England?

So do I love the pleasures of the mind,
Music and poetry, history and art,
It is not very nice for me to find
That I'm a Blimp at heart.

For years and years I have not failed
to laugh
At Indian majors and their pukka
wives
Who prop up British outposts during
half
Their chota-peggish lives.

England is always right, they think,
and just;
Foreigners are notoriously bad.

This obstinate, unthinking childish
trust
I have deplored, by gad!

Only a month ago, if you had said
You had not heard of BRAHMS or
SCHOPENHAUEE
I should have deemed you intellectually
dead—
Lower than any cauliflower.

O superficial windy gas balloon!
When clouds of war were massed on
the horizon
I blared more blimpily than a brass
bassoon
Or any Indian bison.

Laying aside my thesis on the Flute
I raised the good old Poona battle-
cry:

'Line 'em against the nearest wall
and shoot
The lot of 'em!" said I.

Leaving my brethren of the highbrow
fold
To count the times they'd seen
"Aurora's Wedding,"
Singing great hymns of praise I went
and sold
My soul to Lady READING.

"Take me," I begged. "I crave to be
a Waac.
I'll Fany for you till the bugles
cease!"
She took my name and told me to come
back;
But, oh, they signed the Peace!

Listed in black and white to fight the foe,
I stand a pariah in a world apart;
My friends avert their eyes for now
they *know*
That I'm a Blimp at heart. V. G.



"SURELY THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE. . ."

Fishing Notes

"A HOUSE by a stream," repeated M. le Curé. "The house to live in, the stream to fish in. That is what France proposes to give your Premier, and I shall be proud to contribute my mite. And yet, my friend, I have my misgivings. I too have fished. I know the dampness, the emptiness. I see M. Chamberlain fishing all night and catching nothing. I see him returning desolated in the morning, conveying to Mme. Chamberlain the tragic information that the breakfast will be a hollow mockery. Why not let the republic place a contract with a fishmonger?"

"As for me," I replied warmly, "my visions are rosier. I see him staggering to the house, groaning under a load of fish. I see the household, surfeited with fish, longing for a fishless diet, turning with loathing from the mountains of fish placed before them. I see M. Chamberlain stretching his arms wider and wider at the breakfast-table—for will not France be happy to supply her longest fish for such a fisherman?"

"Perhaps," said M. le Curé dubiously. "But not if Père Junot is in the neighbourhood. Père Junot can hold his hands farther apart than anyone in the department. Furthermore, the ménage Junot is always well supplied with fish, even when all the sportsmen of the district go hungry. Have you any such men, at once so crafty and so untruthful, in England?"

"We have," I replied. "They flourish in all democratic countries. It is only under a dictatorship that the

fish are all the same length and the number to be caught by each individual is fixed by decree. However, I am confident that the Premier can outwit even Père Junot if necessary."

"I admire your confidence," said M. le Curé drily. "At the same time I rejoice to think that M. Chamberlain has not the hobby of his predecessor. Père Junot is particularly fond of pork, and I should tremble for the lives of the Premier's pigs, should he have any. Even the gratitude due to M. Chamberlain could not restrain that cunning ancient at the sight or smell of a fat pig. Tell me—why do your Premiers have hobbies so provoking to the dishonest and the mendacious?"

"I deny it," I said. "Is it more injurious to fish from the bank of a stream than to fulminate from a balcony? Is it not better to lean over a wall and poke one's pigs than to lean over a frontier and poke one's neighbours?"

"That is true," admitted M. le Curé. "There are worse hobbies than the tempting of fish and the poking of pigs. But, according to Père Junot, all your Premiers have had curious hobbies. He says, for instance, that he remembers a Premier called Peel whose hobby it was to wear a grey coat and waken the dead."

"Indeed," I said. "Who is Père Junot's informant?"

"He is positive about it," replied M. le Curé. "He says that he remembers the English soldiery singing a song containing remarkable facts about that same M. Peel, and that one of them obligingly translated it for him."

"Soldiers from the North-country," I answered, "would sing anything. They also sang of M. Guillaume le Matelot and of a man who mowed a meadow, but they, like your M. Peel, are characters in fiction. What the soldier sings is not evidence."

"Then," resumed M. le Curé, "there was another Premier who won horse-races, another who cut down forests, and another who played the golf. These are hardly dignified pursuits for Premiers."

"A golf-club can be less injurious than an inkpot," I remarked. "However, let us abandon this historical discussion and return to M. Chamberlain. Is it proposed that the French republic shall maintain a constant supply of fish in the stream? If so, I can foresee international difficulties."

"True," said M. le Curé. "It might be better to pay Père Junot to catch the fish and then send them to London."

"Not at all," I replied. "The attraction lies not in the food value of the fish but in the pursuit and capture."



"YOU WANT TO KNOW WHETHER THIS IS KENSINGTON 78761? I WILL JUST INQUIRE, MADAM."

"Hold!" exclaimed M. le Curé. "Do I understand that M. Chamberlain does not value the food he catches? In that case the solution is simple. Let him catch the same fish over and over again, throwing them—or perhaps it—back into the stream as soon as caught. I prophesy an agreeable retirement for M. Chamberlain, mildly exciting for him and economical for the republic. If the fish died of old age it would of course be replaced by the Ministry of Agriculture."

"That observation," I said, "might be facetious at the annual supper of the Anglers' Association, where it would

be greeted as an old friend, but it is out of place here. When M. Chamberlain has expended much time and patience on the pursuit and capture of a fish he does not throw it back, especially if it is a very large and dangerous fish."

"Of course not," said M. le Curé. "I hope he will go on catching fishes, bigger and bigger fishes, in his old age."

"The hope is mutual," I replied. "And would it be indiscreet to remind you that if he had not caught this dangerous fish none of us might have had any old age?"

W. G.



SEPTEMBER 30th, 1938

"THERE NOW! JUST WHEN I'VE AT LAST GOT THIS THING TO FIT."

Song of Peace

We're never going to fight again,
We treat by consultation;
For soldiers we use diplomats,
For battlefields persuasion—
But all the same I'm off to join
An anti-aircraft station.

It's peace!
We're building up the barricades;
It's peace!
Where did we put those hand-grenades?
When tired from digging trenches at last we seek our
bed
We cannot get to sleep for airplanes zooming overhead;
There's a siren in the cellar and a searchlight on the
shed.
It's peace! It's peace!

We're never going to fight again
Our statesmen all assure us;
Four men and one interpreter—
That's all we need to cure us.

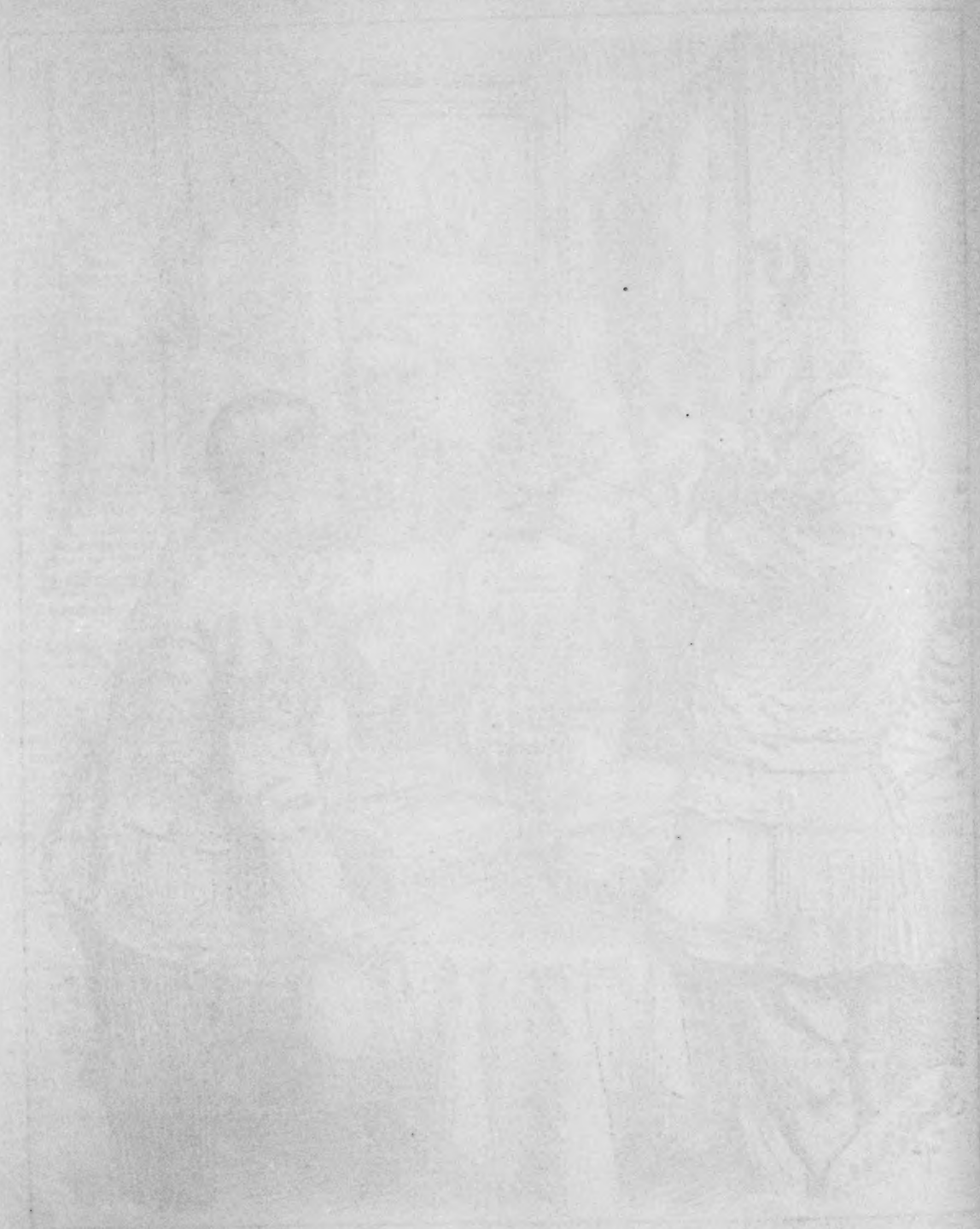
So we really cannot understand why
Lloyds will not insure us.

It's peace!
The gas-masks are distributed;
It's peace!
Ten millions are contributed.
We've dug up lots of trenches in everybody's garden,
We've commandeered the Underground without your leave
or pardon;
Father's a balloon-barrage, mother's an air-warden.
It's peace! It's peace!
It's peace!
They're duplicating at the banks;
It's peace!
The traffic is blocked up with tanks.
We're going to use diplomacy for every strained relation.
We're going to live on friendly terms with each and every
nation—
And we've just completed all our plans for swift evacuation.
It's peace! It's peace!



FOUR'S COMPANY

All together. "Well, before we go on, here's to Self-sacrifice!"



Impressions of Parliament

Monday, October 3rd.—Both Houses began a full-dress debate on the crisis this afternoon, and on to-day's showing the Government found plenty of grateful support for their handling of the Czech problem. There were critics on the Right as well as on the Left who felt that a shabby truce had been gained at the sacrifice of Britain's good name abroad, and who entertained grave misgivings about the dictators' real intentions; but on the whole the feeling was one of relief that the supreme evil of war had been avoided and that, thanks to Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's dauntless pertinacity the leaders of the democracies and the dictatorships had broken the ice of misunderstanding by personal negotiation.

In the Upper House the FOREIGN SECRETARY paid warm tribute to the wisdom of President BENES and to Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's bravery, and, declaring that he himself could never believe in the inevitability of war, referred to the Munich Agreement as a real victory for reason over the forces of mistrust. More generous than his colleagues in Opposition in the Commons, Lord SNELL thought peace had been purchased at a very high price, but that everything depended on how it was going to be used; Lord CREWE blamed for its omissions the League; the PRIMATE considered that no injustice had been committed which would have justified the ghastly alternative of a general war; and Lord CECIL was glad that what he viewed as a sad business had at any rate demonstrated the world's anxiety for peace.

As soon as it assembled the Commons heard Mr. DUFF COOPER's explanation of his retirement from the Cabinet. His speech was heartily cheered by the Labour Party; it was indeed an admirably clear statement of the point of view which holds the mailed fist to be the only form of argument understood by the dictators.

After a word of sympathy with him and a reminder of how much we owed to Lord HALIFAX, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN passed direct to a defence of his policy. He insisted that the Munich Agree-

ment was not a personal triumph for anyone, but rather for the method of reason, and he described how it had substituted international supervision for German dictation at a moment when there was a real danger of the Central European cauldron boiling over. Having thanked M. DALADIER,

Things, however, looked very black to Mr. ATTLEE and also to Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR, who admitted that he preferred *Mein Kampf* to Herr HITLER's speeches, because it never let him down. Mr. EDEN's view was that "war had been averted—for which the world was immeasurably grateful—at the cost of grave injustice to a small and friendly nation."

It was up to the democracies now, he said, to organise themselves properly. Amongst later speakers Mr. LANSBURY gave his whole support to the P.M.; Mr. DALTON had the extraordinary cynicism, considering the record of his party in the matter, to deplore the inadequacy of our defences, and the HOME SECRETARY, pleased with the way it had worked, announced a stock-taking of A.R.P.

Tuesday, October 4th.—Everything else at Westminster today was overshadowed by Lord BALDWIN's maiden speech as a peer, and this turned out to be a powerful vindication of his successor, of whose behaviour in the crisis he entirely approved. He knew of no other man but Mr. CHAMBERLAIN,

he said, who could have succeeded as he had. By making contact with the dictators he had overcome a long-standing obstacle. No greater fallacy had ever been uttered than "You have got to fight some day, so fight now;" war was never inevitable. Lord BALDWIN expressed himself in agreement with those who were for pushing on with rearmament, and declared that for himself he would mobilise industry to-morrow.

Another who was humbly grateful to the P.M. was Lord SAMUEL, in spite of his natural dislike for the Nazi régime. The CHANCELLOR argued closely on the same side; Lord PONSONBY urged that Mr. CHURCHILL was better interned during a crisis; and Lord LLOYD found himself unable to share in the rejoicing.

In the Commons the most notable recruit to the Government's defence was Mr. MAXTON, who reminded the House of the complete failure of the last War to achieve any of its official aims, and asked if anything in life was worth a loss which, thanks to the ingenuity of scientists, might now well be as much as fifty million lives.

On the other side Lord CRANBORNE and Colonel WEDGWOOD were the most cogent speakers;



QUEER COUPLES—I

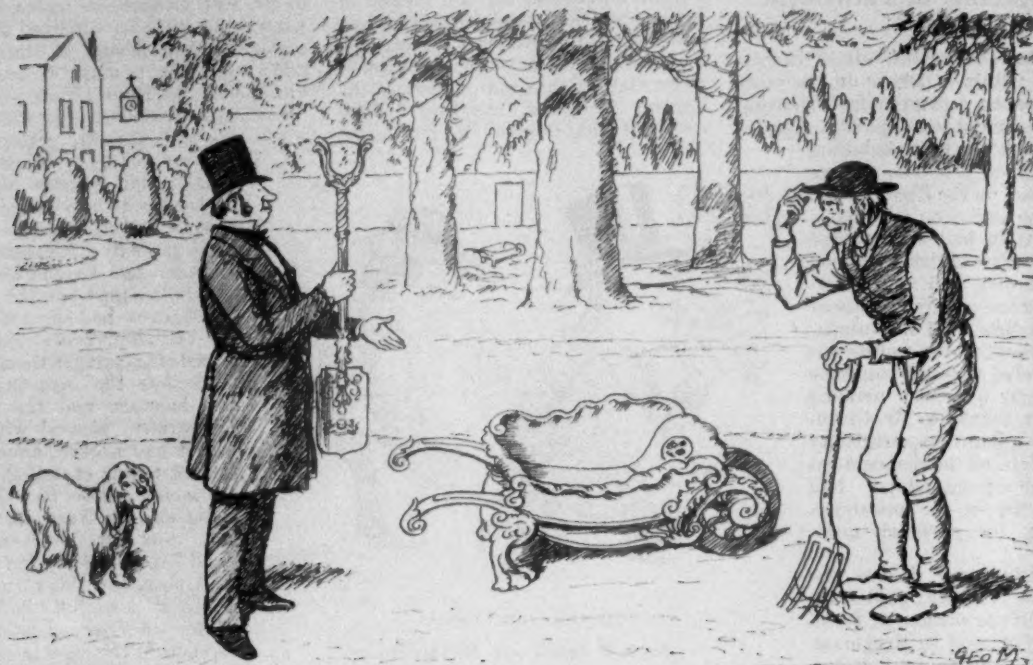
LORD BALDWIN AND MR. MAXTON

Mr. ROOSEVELT and the two dictators for their contributions to the peace, and having made the popular announcement of a loan of ten million pounds to Czechoslovakia, he held out the hope that by the removal of mistrust disarmament might become a fact. Towards this end he promised all his strength.



QUEER COUPLES—II

MR. DUFF COOPER AND MR. MORRISON



"HERE, JOHN, YOU MAY HAVE THESE. THEY WERE PRESENTED TO ME LAST WEEK FOR CUTTING THE FIRST ROD OF THE NEW RAILWAY."

much more so than Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, who, on an ever-rising platform, pulled out one by one all the known stops of his party organ.

Wednesday, October 5th.—The Lords concluded their debate to-night, the critics of the Government declining to accept the offer of a vote made by Lord STANHOPE in the final speech from the Front Bench; an effective survey in which he quoted the message sent to the Czech Government through the British Ambassador, to show that no intolerable pressure had been brought to bear on them.

The hardest words of the day came from Lord LYTON, who was distressed to find himself differing from those he respected on a matter of conscience, and blamed the Government for drifting from the sheet-anchor of the League. For the Labour Party, Lord MARLEY was reasonable. Lord GAINFORD, a member of the 1914 Cabinet, considered Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had saved civilisation; Lord TRENCHARD had never thought much of Czechoslovakia's natural strategic frontier in any case; and Lord ASTOR asked for a secret session of Parliament at which the real facts of the crisis could be told.

In the Commons Sir JOHN SIMON was at the top of his form in a summing-up of the position which did much to solidify opinion in favour of the Government. He pointed out that even



The Student of History. "H'm!—As Sir PHILIP FRANCIS SAID IN 1801, 'IT IS A PEACE WHICH EVERYBODY IS GLAD OF, THOUGH NOBODY IS PROUD OF.'"

the Berlin Correspondent of *The Daily Herald* admitted that the German people acclaimed the Agreement as a victory for peace rather than for National Socialism, and he asked why we should be blamed for putting Lord RUNCIMAN's conclusion to the Czechs—that they must choose between cessation and invasion? Comparing a dictator to a motor-car without a reverse-gear, he found hope, amongst other things, in the fact that a dictator had been obliged to back even a short distance. As for the idea of an exclusive Four-Power Pact, he emphatically rejected the notion that Russia or smaller Powers should not join in the re-settlement of Europe.

Mr. GREENWOOD, who followed, was witty and more moderate than usual, but Mr. CHURCHILL in a fine oration was as gloomy as could be. He spoke of the "unmitigated defeat" which we had sustained, and he feared that the independence of Great Britain and France had perhaps been fatally endangered. The terms which Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had brought back from Munich could have been obtained, he said, through the ordinary diplomatic channels at any time during the summer.

Benevolence

"WOULD you like to hear what happened to General Battlegate?" asked Laura on her return from London.

Charles said rather wearily that if it was looking straight into the face of a tiger across the Mess-table at Ponang in 1891, he knew about it already. Thoroughly.

I said that if it was anything to do with his partner's last-hand-but-five at the bridge-table a month ago I didn't really seem to care about hearing it.

"It's something that happened to him only last Saturday, and I was there at the time," Laura said.

I returned courteously that an eyewitness's account of any incident however trivial always had a certain value.

Charles just went back to his crossword puzzle.

"Well," said Laura, "you know they took me to the theatre—the Battlegates, I mean? And of course it was frightfully kind of them, and I did my absolute best with the Indian Civil Service nephew. He hadn't been home for years and years and years, and of course it was just like Rip van Winkle. He kept on looking for my gloves under the stalls."

"What made you," I asked Laura, "hide your gloves under the stalls? Just girlish fun?"

"They weren't really there. They weren't anywhere. But he thought that as I wasn't wearing them I must have dropped them," she explained.

"Did he look for your fan at the same time?"

Laura disregarded this rather satirical shaft.

"When it was all over and we were coming out, Mrs. Battlegate suddenly said—you know how like a horse she is—she suddenly said, 'Oh, look!'"

"('Every horse I've ever had,' Charles muttered, 'has sooner or later made just exactly that remark.')

"And a minute later she said, 'No, don't look.' So of course I did."

"Naturally."

"And so did the General, and so did Rip van Winkle. And what do you think it was?"

Charles without any hesitation at all suggested a group consisting of the Prime Minister, Monsieur Daladier, old Uncle Tom Cobby and all.

I simply said that nowadays anybody might see anything, from a couple of incendiary bombs to a dove bearing an olive-branch in its beak.

Laura shook her head.

"It was a young man who couldn't even stand up."

"Do you mean he was so young that he hadn't yet learned how? Because, if so, surely he ought to have been in his cot at home."

"Speaking as a man of the world—" Charles began.

"Yes," said Laura, "the General spoke as a man of the world too, and said there was a great difference between being happy and being intoxicated."

"And which was the young man?"

"He wasn't happy. He looked terribly pale and kept on lurching about, and couldn't get the door of the car open. And Mrs. Battlegate said he was in no fit state to drive himself anywhere, and where were his parents?"

"And where were they?" one naturally inquired; but Laura explained that nobody knew, and in actual fact nobody except Mrs. Battlegate had even inquired.

The General, however, had asked whether the young man knew where he was going.

"Like a tract, 'Whither art thou bound?' Only he really meant, where was his home, and the young man just said Nevern Square, and Mrs. Battlegate said that meant the whole length of Piccadilly, and it would be equivalent to murder to let him drive alone. And of course it would have been."

"Do you mean to say, Laura, that Mrs. Battlegate drove him home?"

"No. She made the General do it. He didn't get back till long after midnight."

"I suppose he was telling the young man that he'd been a subaltern himself once upon a time."

"I don't know," said Laura thoughtfully. "He drove him all the way to Nevern Square and rang the bell for him and handed him over to his wife. And he even offered to take the car round to wherever their garage was for them."

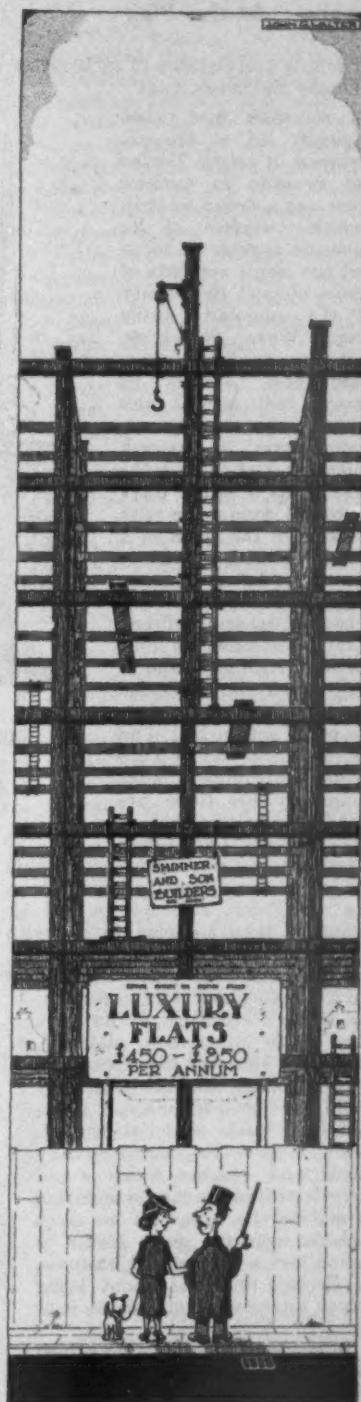
"I've always said," Charles remarked, quite untruly, "that the General has a heart of gold. I hope the young man's wife was properly grateful. What did she do?"

"She said, 'Thank you very much, but we haven't got a car.'" E. M. D.

Doldrums in the Shipping Industry

"Two months ago I told the House of Commons that after a boat constructor had devoured a goat a deer it usually slept the sleep of repletion for several months."

Egyptian Paper.



"I'M AFRAID IT'S GOING TO MEAN 'LOVE IN A COTTAGE' FOR A YEAR OR TWO, DARLING."

At the Play

"TROILUS AND CRESSIDA" IN MODERN DRESS (WESTMINSTER)

I SURMISE that what originally led to the experiment of acting *Troilus and Cressida* in modern dress was a desire to strip Homeric warfare of its romantic appeal. Armour and the single combats of heroes obscure the futility of the singularly futile Trojan War. So let us, said the producer, show *Ajax* and *Achilles* as heavy, bull-necked and brutal men of the sergeant-major type, as barrack bullies, and let us show the fighting as a rather dirty nocturnal scrimmage with firearms in the spirit of a trench raid with some nasty shooting of defenceless men.

The Greek camp has one or two regular army officers, notably *Agamemnon* (Mr. ARTHUR RIDLEY), who is very much the monocled cavalry officer, but we do not really get the feel of an Officers' Mess until we see *Priam* surrounded after dinner by his three up-standing subaltern sons, of whom *Hector* (Mr. COLIN KEITH-JOHNSTON) conveys admirably the impression of being an ace pilot in the Air Force, although in fact he fights, as they all seem to do, with pistols on the ground.

I could not help feeling that the old kind of combat, and in particular *Hector's* challenge, could have been made much more plausible, that the idea of the spectators crowding along the walls of the city could have been maintained, if use had been made of aerial combat. But then there is a genuine chivalry about such combat which would have destroyed the careful intention of making the victory of the great *Achilles* over the great *Hector* in actual fact a very sordid business, as *Hector's* final line about being struck unarmed plainly shows it to be.

In general the war scenes gained greatly by the modern setting. *Troilus* in particular (Mr. ROBERT HARRIS) was as real as a subaltern from *Journey's End*. Mr. HARRIS, whatever the clothes he has put on, has the gift of conveying intensity

of inner feeling, and no doubt in Trojan garb he could still have made us feel that *Troilus* really was a young man very much in love. But he becomes much more vivid and his military



COUNCIL OF WAR AT THE SIEGE OF TROY

Nestor Mr. JOHN GARSIDE
Agamemnon Mr. ARTHUR RIDLEY
Ulysses Mr. ROBERT SPEAIGHT

service carries a more authentic note of danger in his field-service uniform.

Nestor and *Ulysses* (Mr. JOHN GARSIDE and Mr. ROBERT SPEAIGHT) strike us as cosmopolitan men of the



THE GIRL WHO DIDN'T WANT TO GO HOME

Troilus Mr. ROBERT HARRIS
Cressida Miss RUTH LODGE
Pandarus Mr. MAX ADRIAN

world who would be more at home on the yachts of armament kings than at the G.H.Q. *Nestor's* presence indeed becomes much less plausible in modern dress, but what *Ulysses* has to say, delivered with the point with which Mr. SPEAIGHT invests it, between puffs at his cigar, ceases to be the mechanical contrivance to forward the plot of a Shakespearean tragedy. It becomes the real and immediate advice of a shrewd man of the world tackling the psychological question of staleness in the field and the rivalries and ill-temper of mess-mates who have been together, under frequently monotonous conditions, for too long.

Ulysses has most of the best things to say in a play singularly rich in apt quotations for the present times. But many of the players must have felt that while being dressed naturally put them at once closer to the audience, it accentuated the difficulty of much that they had to say. The character least troubled by the language and most immediately benefited by what he wore was *Pandarus*, whom Mr. MAX ADRIAN made into a genial but not attractive

elderly bachelor of means, more interested in *Troilus* than in *Cressida*.

It was curious that the love-scenes, which should be the most independent of costume or setting, in fact suffered most, and *Cressida's* swift inconstancy in the Greek camp with *Diomedes*, a conventional subaltern of second-rate attractions, did not emerge as the important part of the play it is plainly intended to be.

Thersites (Mr. STEPHEN MURRAY), who slouches on in a tweed coat and dirty grey flannel trousers, with a cigarette, is a railer after the modern kind, who seems to have come on to the Trojan War from a Left Wing rally; but then is it in keeping with the part of a modern enemy of the established order to be as shocked as *Thersites* is at promiscuous attachments in private life? D. W.

"OFFICIAL SECRET" (New)

Not enough sympathy is met with by the dramatic critic when, confronted by the play of detection,

he is expected to give a good idea of what it is like and yet let fall no suggestion of the hidden springs which the author touches off to keep things going. It makes no difference whether it is the sort of play in which big dumb men diligently fill each other with lead, or the sort where pale professors swap Proust and chivvy one another to death with the higher thought; the job is almost an impossibility.

It raises all kinds of problems of honesty. When the genial Vicar, to take only one, turns out in the last scene to have merited a Blue for garrotting as well as football, is the critic to say of the actor concerned that "Mr. Blank's breezy vestry portrait carried an authentic ring," which might seem a trifle impolite to the cloth; or that "in his many-sided picture of clerical activities Mr. Blank showed a rare breadth of temperament," which is sailing dangerously near the wind; or is he to play for safety by pretending that the Vicar is only a minor character: "Mr. Blank did well"? The last course is grossly unfair to Mr. Blank, who may have carried the evening, but it is likely to please the author; and at the back of every critic's mind there cannot but be an uncomfortable feeling that such specialists in hidden doom as detective-authors are not men to be trifled with, however much they may pretend that it wounds them to squash a fly.

This play is by Mr. JEFFREY DELL, and I am not only actuated by the fear of a blow-pipe arrow in the neck or rat's-bane in my beer when I say that he gave the public an entertainment which ought to have won its favour. His quest is to trace a leakage of R.A.F. blue-prints, and up to the point at which, earlier than is usual, he lets us have the identity of the thief in order to give a further twist to the story I was very decently bamboozled.

Before I line up the suspects so that you can make a deduction for yourself, you must know that a carburettor has been invented which will permit British bombers to go to such ridiculous heights that no other Air Force can touch them. Its final details are being worked out in a secret camp which has been moved to Salisbury Plain as the result of a mysterious escape of information. Now, on the eve of the Ministry's final trials,

the Intelligence Department gets wind of a further attempt to steal the secret for another Power; and these are the people who must come under suspicion:—

Charles Houghton (Mr. JAMES CRAVEN) the inventor of the carburettor, obvious-



A BLACKMAILER'S CHIN IN DANGER

Porter Mr. HENRY HEWITT
Peter Thurlow Mr. ROBERT DOUGLAS

ly keen about it, but also overdrawn at the bank, having been foolish enough to open a joint account with his wife,

Dorothy (Miss CAROL GOODNER), who pretends she is losing money on horses but is really losing it in blackmail to Porter (Mr. HENRY HEWITT), the

butler, so accomplished and charming a fellow that he makes crime a pleasure to watch. (An extremely skilful sketch, this.) His hold on her is his knowledge of a love-affair, since her marriage but now over, with

Peter Thurlow (Mr. ROBERT DOUGLAS), the dashing young test-pilot allotted to the camp by the R.A.F. He is still in love with Dorothy. The other expert at the camp is an engineer named

Maddison (Mr. BECKETT BOULD), a sound-seeming chap, who is married to a chatty woman called

Evelyn (Miss MARGERY CALDICOTT). There remain

Stuart (Mr. CYRIL RAYMOND), a hearty motorist who breaks down in the mist outside on the eve of the trials and has to be put up for the night.

Ginsberg (Mr. MACDONALD PARKER), an American business-man of innocent aspect,

Sir Arthur Hambro (Mr. A. R. WHATMORE), an eminent crustacean from Whitehall,

Hooper (Mr. TOM HELMORE), a nice young policeman, and

Colonel Cairns (Mr. CECIL PARKER), a sleuth with a very good sense of humour and a disarmingly amateur technique.

Having thus scrupulously preserved Mr. DELL's official secret, I will only say that his play, though it slows up in wit and speed in the middle, is neat and satisfying enough to have deserved a kinder fate than sudden death.

ERIC.

Winter Draws On

"Wanted, navy blue tailored costume, medium size; also black fox fur underclothing; good condition."—Advt. in "The Lady."

Weather Note

"F. A. FINE AND SUSPENDED BROILY."

Evening News.

"The highest guest was 63 stones, the lowest 39 stones 3lbs. 9ozs."

Local Paper.

They must have been pretty wide, both of them.

"A Kuyana man has seen a pink elephant, telegraphs the Capetown correspondent of *The Natal Mercury*. Durban revellers may regard this as commonplace—but in this instance the elephant was really there. It was a new born calf, about three feet high, spotted near Deepwells recently."—*Natal Mercury*.

Spotted as well?



THE INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT TRIES GUILTY

Dorothy Houghton Miss CAROL GOODNER
Colonel Cairns Mr. CECIL PARKER

The Bank Manager

UNTIL my wife and I became "The Five Mile Cottage Tea Rooms Company Limited" we had always looked upon bank managers as persons lifted above all human emotions.

We knew no bank managers personally, except the uncle of my wife's cousin Maud. But he had retired years ago and lived at Dundee. Besides, we had only seen him once—at our wedding. I have a small account at a branch in Cornwall where my father first opened his account about the time of Majuba. My wife uses the Post Office Savings Bank. We felt that, doubtless, bank managers have their lighter moments. Some must play golf, collect lepidoptera, ride to hounds, breed pekes. But we had no data.

Then we were presented with Mr. Biskit. The result of the resolution which we hadn't read at our first—and so far unique—Company Meeting appointed the Southshire Bank as our bankers, and very soon Mr. Biskit, manager of the Bracken branch of the bank and custodian of the company account, became part of our lives. He was as important as Millicent, for he was, we discovered, an unbelievable and fantastic person—a bank manager with a temperament.

We wrote to our friends in London and our relations scattered about the country. Had their B.M.'s temperaments? One and all wrote back and answered "No." Some even telephoned ardent negatives. One or two sent

telegrams. Hard-hearted and cold-blooded fish they all seemed to be. How different, we said, from our Mr. Biskit!

We had to consider him very carefully. Was the day warm and sunny, then he would be bored with his bank and it would be as well not to telephone him. Was it a dull grey day. Then he might be gloomy and depressed. Better leave the matter of a little overdraft for a more propitious moment.

The other day something had to be done. Rabbits were pouring into our garden nightly and devouring our carefully nurtured and watered lettuces. We needed some hundreds of yards of wire-netting. The coal-shed roof leaked. The carriage drive needed many yards of gravel (a customer's car had tactlessly punctured itself on a wretched outcrop, and I dislike changing wheels). To be quite frank, all this needed definite co-operation on the part of the Southshire Bank.

"We must," said my wife, "see Mr. Biskit. Shall I go?"

"No," I answered firmly. "It's Millicent's half-day and I will not be left here to serve teas by myself. The kettle never boils until people have gone. I shall go myself."

I had to hurry to catch the 2.34 bus to Bracken, and I was relieved to find Mr. Biskit genial and sunburnt in his grey flannel suit. A good omen when he wore grey flannels, as we had discovered. I was ushered into his room. I sat down.

"I wish I was a plumber," he said, sighing, standing by the window and looking out on his garden.

I knew all about this opening gambit. To say "Why?" was wrong; "Why not?" equally dangerous. I smiled, I hoped sympathetically, and remarked that his must indeed be a difficult job. The right move. He agreed, and remarked that the weather was good and inquired about the well-being of "Five Mile Cottage Tea Rooms Company, Ltd."

"Well," I said, "I—that is, we were wondering if—"

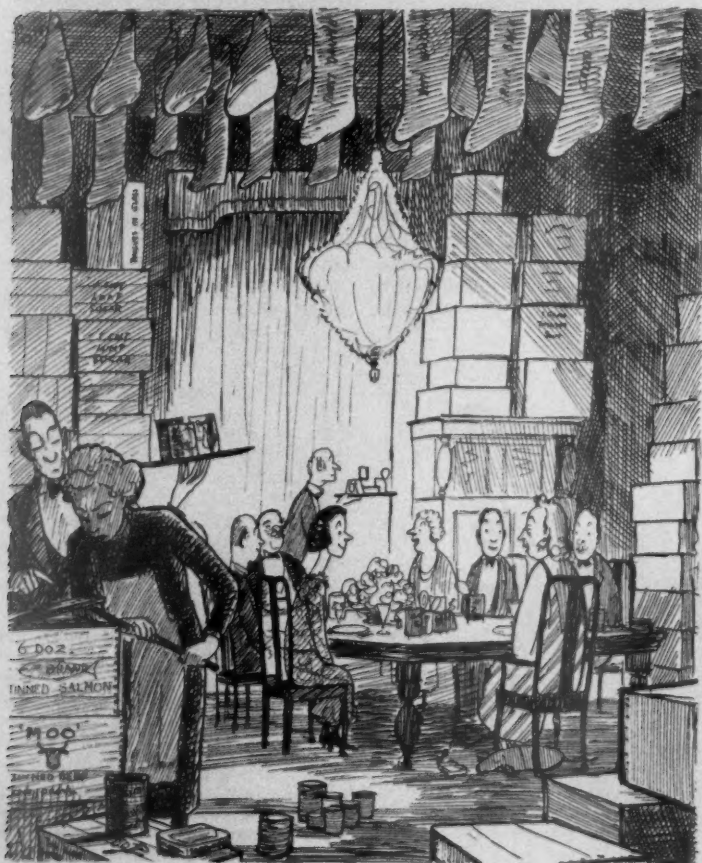
"Ah," said Mr. Biskit cheerfully, sitting down and crossing one well-trouser leg over the other. He looked down at his well-polished shoes with a pleased smile. "Shall we have a look at your ledger?"

He pressed a button on his desk. There was silence. The door opened. A very small, very alert, very junior clerk entered. He came smartly to attention and rapped out "Sir?"

"The E-G ledger, please, Fotheringay."

"Yes, sir."

There was silence again. Then Mr. Biskit sighed. "A bank manager in



A SUGGESTION

FOR PATRIOTS WHO WISH TO GET RID OF THE SURPLUS SUPPLIES WHICH THEY LAID IN DURING THE CRISIS—A PEACE CELEBRATION FOR POOR RELATIONS.

embryo," he said. "I was like that once."

We exchanged man-to-man smiles. I remarked that the bank chrysanthemums were coming on well. He said that they weren't doing so badly considering the dry weather. . . . Fotheringay entered, staggering a little under an enormous ledger. His effort to come to attention with it resulted in a neatly-averted catastrophe. Mr. Biskit saved it—and Fotheringay—with a swift Rugby tackle. "Sir," said Fotheringay, retiring backwards from the room, a little pink.

Mr. Biskit and I exchanged further man-to-man smiles. He opened the ledger. He selected a pencil. He began to go through the items. Suddenly he looked up. A fine network of lines spread back from his eyes when he smiled.

"How are your potatoes? Got them all up yet? I'm a bit disappointed in mine. I wonder whether I used the right fertiliser . . ."

Now my wife and I were particularly proud of our potatoes. Many rows had gone seven pounds to the root. Our conversation went its way. I myself had a particularly good fertiliser . . . I hope I did not talk down to him.

I suddenly noticed the clock on the mantelpiece. It was half-past three: the bus went at 3.33. I thanked Mr. Biskit. I fled. I caught the bus. I sat in it in the warm glow of a job well done. A most intelligent man, the bank manager, I reflected. An excellent gardener in the making. Most interesting to talk to. . . .

My wife met me at the door. "Well, how did you get on?" she asked.

"Everything is fine," I said. "He was wearing his grey flannels."

"Oh, then we can order the wire-netting right away? He agreed?"

"Rather!" I said, then I stopped. Had Mr. Biskit . . . ? For that matter, had I . . . ?

"What did you talk about?" asked my wife suspiciously.

"Oh—er—plumbers and potatoes and fertilisers and—"

"I don't believe you asked him at all."

"Well—I . . ."

I have often wondered what technique Mr. Biskit uses with a book-maker; but probably the question never arises.

The Ineradicable Pin

"If a world war follows now, that document will pin the immediate responsibility for its precipitation ineradicably on the shoulders of one man."

New York "Herald Tribune."



C. S. GRAY :

"IT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR. I'M KEEPIN' THIS RIG ON TILL THE TENSION 'AS ENTIRELY EASED."

Dies Propinquat

WHEN all the clocks in the flat are wrong,

And when for indubious time I long,
By means of the telephone at my side
The matter may soon be rectified

Quite easily and nicely.
By dialling T I M I'm told
By a beautiful girl with a voice of gold:

"At the third stroke it will be three"
(Or any old hour it happens to be)

"And twenty minutes precisely."

But if, when weary of making rhymes,
I tackle the crossword in *The Times*,
There's no such mechanical aid to find
The word that eludes what I call my mind.

Yet the day's within our hailing
When I to the phone may slink and when

By dialling C R O and 10
I shall be told by a beautiful girl
With a voice of purest Orient pearl:

"Ten (down) is 'CROOKED SAILING.'"

Washboards in the Sky

It has been said (I think by some Latin author) that there are as many cures for seasickness as there are men. In a like manner everybody has his own particular recipe for cheering himself up. When a man feels that there is a suicide impending in the family and the chances are that he will play a leading part in the inquest he flies to some trusted stimulant or tonic—whether it be beer or skittles, whisky or bicarbonate of soda. In my own case it is a gramophone record.

Picture me in your mind's eye (remembering that I am a good deal younger and better-looking than you might suppose) as I slouch, cloaked in depression, to the gramophone and moodily select this life-saving record. The label is of a cheerful reddish hue and is tastefully ornamented with an amiable-looking dog; but it is not the dog that brings a faint smile to my lips and a suggestion of lustre to my eyes as I gaze on the label. It is the printed intimation that this record was made by the Washboard Rhythm Boys, and is called "I'm Gonna Play Down By The Ohio."

Somehow the mere thought of a washboard as a musical instrument cheers me up. How it is played I could never quite make up my mind; sometimes I think the performer beats it with his open hand, sometimes with his clenched fist; at other times I am convinced that he is striking himself over



"DOGS MUST BE KEPT ON THE LEAD."

the head with it. The result in any case, though somewhat oppressive to the ear, is strangely soothing to the soul.

I should perhaps explain before we get the record on the turntable that there are other instruments besides washboards in the band. What the other instruments are I am not prepared to say, nor do the Boys themselves seem to be too clear on this point. But what does it matter? There they are, ninety-six carefree negroes (it sounds like ninety-six, though in sober truth there were probably only eight), with their trumpets and their saxophones and their washboards; and they are going to enjoy themselves.

The record opens with an awe-inspiring playing of the principal (and only) tune by the full strength of the company at the highest speed of which they are capable. Then the din sinks

to a happy murmur of washboards, with a string-bass slapping out the beat, and the vocalist begins.

I have the highest possible regard for that vocalist, who is in all likelihood a model citizen; but somehow when I hear him I am irresistibly reminded of that other great exponent of jazz (let him be nameless) who conducted his last performances from a chair because he was never at one and the same time inspired to conduct and sober enough to stand. There is the same glorious abandon, the same supremely careless art. At first the words of the verse are clearly distinguishable; the vocalist is announcing that he is going to play on his trumpet, down by the Ohio. He then repeats that he is going to play on his saxophone, down by the Ohio. Overcome by the prospect of such virtuosity he subsides into animal mutterings for the next line of the verse, but finally comes out strong with the declaration that he is going to swing on his saxophone—yeah—down by the Ohio. And even as he concludes the band roars into life again, with in the foreground a saxophonist (and a good one) striving manfully to make his solo audible above the general tumult. Up to now the washboards have provided a background only; but in the next verse the singer fervently declaims that he is about to play on his washboard—to tinkle on his little washboard—to play on that washboard—bwup-beep-waugh—ugh—grooh—yah—down by the Ohio.

This is the opportunity that the First Washboard has been waiting for. He is, I imagine (I may be wronging him), a man of meagre intellectual attainments outside his art; but can he swing that washboard! Long before the singer has finished the verse he is making his washboard wish it had never been born. He thumps it with his fist, he bangs it on the floor, he tears at it (I am judging only from the



"I TOLD YOU NOT TO WEAR A FUR COAT IN THE COUNTRY."



"I FEEL WE SHOULD WAIT BEFORE MAKING ANY DECISIONS UNTIL WE SEE WHAT HITLER'S NEXT MOVE IS GOING TO BE."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Sanity for All

ON the last page of the fourth volume of the *Journals and Letters of Reginald Viscount Esher* (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 25/-) there is reiterated the writer's belief that his best work was always destined to be done in detachment from party or profession. He seems to have been intended by nature to be a constitutional monarch, and although he admits that on occasion his resolution had been sorely tried, he refuses to repent his steadfast maintenance of his independence. The earlier part of this volume shows him close to the nerve centres at Paris in the later years of the Great War, puzzled, bothered, hardly more prescient than the man in the street when trying to forecast the vagaries of French politics or the next turn in the perpetual wrangles between rival schools of military strategy, but constantly in touch with everyone who mattered and an incalculable asset in smoothing away personal frictions. His war hero was DOUGLAS HAIG. Later, back in his Scottish home, he is still making new contacts that immediately assume the qualities of friendship—with Labour Ministers when Labour takes office no less than with all their predecessors. Finally he drops into reflective humour, yet to the end of his life he is ready to meet all demands for practical counsel from the infinite resources of his brilliant commonsense.

A Pippa de Nos Jours

It is manifestly unfair to judge a book according to the mood in which one reads it. But it has lately been hard to reach that mood of leisurely epicureanism in which in calmer days we used to enjoy our Henry James; and it is just that which *The Death of the Heart* (GOLLANCZ, 8/-) requires and, given a fair chance, would probably induce. If Miss ELIZABETH BOWEN is not directly a disciple of the master she is certainly in his tradition, and the subtle maladjustments, the uneasy indolence of the household behind the elegant Regency façade overlooking Regent's Park are suggested with a good deal of his elaborate delicacy. The crudities of the Seale set, centring in a gimcrack villa residence which is only just not a lodging-house—for Seale

is by the sea—he might have found too repugnant even to hint at; but *Portia*, projected willy-nilly into both worlds and belonging to neither, has the youth and the innocence which were among the constant preoccupations of one who was never himself either young or unsophisticated. She is at an "awkward age" for herself and others—an *enfant terrible* whose devastating candour of heart embarrasses while it cries out for exploitation—a *Pippa* who passes but brings no message of universal well-being, only a heightened *malaise* to the wearily over-civilised and bewildered and darkly-realised grief to herself. If her story seems a little remote that is hardly the fault of its accomplished teller.

The Hard and Fast Life of Prince Metternich

Diplomacy blended with affairs of the heart is a mixture appreciated on the Continent but unpalatable, one feels, to the average Englishman. Those of us who are capable of taking a serious interest in problems of government prefer our politics with as few frills and *frou-frous* as possible; and the career of METTERNICH—unlike that of, say, DISRAELI—can well afford to stand without its womenfolk, for they are of little structural importance in that strong and cunning edifice. It strikes one therefore as unfortunate that Mr. FREDERICK DE REICHENBERG, who has collected a great deal of notable material for a new biography, should have been persuaded to lavish his research on an historical romance. The international complications of *Prince Metternich in Love and War* (SECKER, 18/-) are pretty stiff going for the uninitiated, and the initiated are little likely to respond to the liquid gaze and irresistible *déshabille* of the great Austrian diplomat's seven principal mistresses. The only point at which melodrama and realism, *welt-politik* and domesticity strikingly converge is METTERNICH's personal opposition to NAPOLEON and the part he and his first wife played in BUONAPARTE's marriage to MARIE-LOUISE. This is admirably handled and extremely interesting.

An Episcopal Quixote

The tussle between institutionalism and mysticism is as old as Christianity itself. Neither can live without the other,



"I'M AFRAID I MUST ASK YOU GENTLEMEN TO ADDRESS ALL YOUR REMARKS THROUGH THE CHAIR."

for discipline is nothing without personal access to God, and personal access to God has never long outlasted its ecclesiastical safeguards. Yet there has always been a mutual intolerance between the extreme advocates of the spirit and the extreme custodians of the letter; and the great seventeenth-century feud between FÉNELON and BOSSUET is, like so many manifestations of French intelligence, a combat of extremists. In his sagaciously tempered study of *Fénelon* (BURNS, OATES AND WASHBOURNE, 10/6) Mr. J. LEWIS MAY has drawn a graceful and sympathetic picture of the great humanist Archbishop; and if he is less happy charting the channels and shoals of FÉNELON's mysticism it is only because his knowledge of contemplation in general strikes one as too obviously improvised for the occasion. He goes so far as to suggest that mysticism is alien to the English temperament—an odd indictment of the fellow-countrymen of RICHARD ROLLE and JULIAN of Norwich! But he is scrupulously fair to FÉNELON's fatal friend, Mme. GUYON, whom he considers as honest as FÉNELON found her and almost as dangerous as BOSSUET did.

Men at Arms

IAN HAY's book *The King's Service* (METHUEN, 7/6) divides itself into two main sections. One deals with history and regimental records. It tells why the Iron Duke selected the name of Thomas Atkins to indicate the private soldier. It tells why the Somersets have the word "Jellalabad" on their badges; why at the annual trooping ceremony of the Sherwood Foresters the senior private carries the King's colour; why the Cameronians parade for church fully armed; and so on. The second part describes in minute detail the soldier's life, its advantages and the "catches" which the recruit discovers after a few weeks of duty. It explains how the soldier's lot has changed for the better during recent years and what is still in contemplation for the future. It touches on the vexed questions of marriage off the strength and employment on discharge. The book is in fact the work of one who, though, as he says, soldiering is no real business of his, has from his earliest days admired the soldier, particularly the rank and file, and at the time of the Great War leaped into prominence as one of the most sympathetic interpreters of the soldier's thoughts. He has written it to help to stop the popular tradition of disparagement of soldiering as a profession. It ought to be read particularly by those who view the King's Forces as a barely necessary encumbrance in peace times and spring to enthusiastic attention during war.



"I'M TAKING MY BOY TO THE ZOO."

"INDEED! I'M SENDING MINE TO ETON."

F. H. Townsend, October 18th, 1905.

After Worcester

It seems now to be generally agreed that the character of our second CHARLES was sadly misrepresented in the past; that in spite of a few superficial faults, due chiefly to careless bonhomie and a liking for feminine society, he was essentially

the best of good fellows, a true patriot and a real gentleman. Miss GEORGETTE HEYER would certainly subscribe to this view. She gives us here in a novel—*Royal Escape* (HEINEMANN, 8/6)—the story of the six weeks that followed the Battle of Worcester. Fiction though it is, her book sticks closely to history, opening with the vain attempt to urge LESLIE'S Scots troopers to one more charge, the flight to White Ladies, the separation from all his followers except WILMOT, the concealment in the famous oak at Boscobel, aided by Major CARLIS and the PENDERELS, and then the many narrow escapes that befell him in those subsequent journeys to Moseley and Abbotsleigh, Trent and Brighthelmstone, where he ultimately found the *Surprise* and was enabled to set sail for Fécamp. Miss HEYER is a good historical novelist of the more careful sort, and her bibliography at the end of the book shows that she has taken adequate pains to verify her facts. Apart from that, she has a good eye for character. CHARLES himself is lifelike and likeable; the very charming heroine as whose servant he posed during the long ride to Trent, with her shyness and loyalty, is excellent; so is WILMOT, with his natural courage always at war with his overstrained nerves. A good story, which keeps the reader in a suitable state of sympathetic excitement through the whole forty-two days it covers.

"And That Reminds Me . . ."

Retired Admirals are usually excellent and entertaining raconteurs, and Admiral Sir FREDERICK FISHER, K.C.V.O., in *Naval Reminiscences* (MULLER, 12/6), shows as one of the best of them. Neither politics nor grievances are aired in this book; it is just a record of a long and happy life at sea by one whose Service nickname ("Uncle Bill") came so naturally to everyone that even during the almost unbelievably solemn proceedings of a court-martial the President addressed him by that honourable title. There are so many amusing yarns thrown out that quotation must be left to the readers; yet the one of the Naval A.D.C. not allowed to send telegrams in cypher, but told to inform the Foreign Office in 1877 of a Russian attack on and victory over the Turks, who sent a Bible reference and (the F.O. having access everywhere) "clicked" with the experiment, is almost the best. The author joined the Navy in 1865; he served in Australian and Pacific waters, South America and the West Indies, the Mediterranean and at home. He saw the change from sail to steam and from muzzle-loading to director-firing. He was among those present when the new ironclad *Captain* capsized in the Bay. At any rate it is to be hoped that the gallant officer will continue his stories, as it is clear that not half have been told.



"YOU'RE SURE YOU FEEL ALL RIGHT—I CAN HEAR A SONATA IN F MINOR BY BRAHMS."

Ancient Foundations

Let it at once be recorded that *Old Public Schools of England* (BATSFORD, 7/6) thoroughly deserves the praise that Lord BURGHLEY gives to it in a foreword. True to his title Mr. JOHN RODGERS rules out such schools as Cheltenham and Marlborough, though they were founded nearly a hundred years ago; but ample material is provided by the really venerable foundations for a richly informative book, leavened by a number of delightful illustrations. Perhaps the question to which school the prize for antiquity ought to be given will never be settled to the satisfaction of everybody, but it is to be noted that King's, Canterbury, has very considerable claims to that distinction. Mr.

RODGERS deals faithfully and at times humorously with his extensive subject, and in his first chapter he writes with sound common-sense of both the past and the future of our peculiarly named "public" schools. An excellent volume.

Mothers and Sons

By placing the chief scenes of *St. Peter's Finger* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 7/6) in a convent school, Miss GLADYS MITCHELL has obtained an unusually interesting setting for her latest detective tale. Moreover her literary style is attractive and she is an expert in the art of deduction; but on the other hand the pace of her story is too leisurely and a list of the principal residents in the convent, with their official positions attached to their names, would have removed any trace of confusion. In spite of the fact that Miss MITCHELL refers to her industrious investigator, *Mrs. Bradley*, as "a hag-like pterodactyl" it is impossible not to be amused by and to admire this shrewd woman, who quietly dominates a story which in its class is distinctly worthy of honourable mention.

On the Run

Dial 999 (COLLINS) is full of chases. First of all *Jack Bassel* had to bolt precipitately when he obtained information which caused the German police to take what may legitimately be called a morbid interest in him. Then *Oliver Keene*, "a Secret Service operative," went to Germany to make various investigations, and his sojourn in that expansive country provided him with an unlimited amount of active exercise. *Keene* had good luck to help him, but as an artful dodger he was quite invincible, and although readers may weary of so many pursuits Mr. J. M. WALSH certainly gives them some fine runs for their money (7/6).

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Charivaria

WRITING in a morning paper "Worcestershire Hunter" says that "the motor car does not quiver with affection under the touch of your hand." It is evident that he knows little about second-hand cars.

★ ★ ★

"EDUCATION WEEK AT HARROW."
Sunday Times.

Any comments, Eton?

★ ★ ★

"Artichokes may be thrown in a pit and covered with ashes," says a gardening hint. This is said to be better than covering them with sauce and trying to eat them.

★ ★ ★

"Will Poland recognise Czecho-Slovakia?" asks a headline. Unless things improve soon even the Czechs won't be able to.

★ ★ ★

A ghost that chases people along a country lane is reported from Wales. But no doubt it gives them a start first.

★ ★ ★

An island in the South Pacific inhabited by a native tribe is said to alter its position according to gales and currents. There is a good deal of feeling locally against what is described as a policy of drift.

★ ★ ★

Particularly luxurious upholstery and well-sprung seats are a feature of the new car models. Is this a plot to get the FÜHRER to sit down when he goes motor-ing?

★ ★ ★

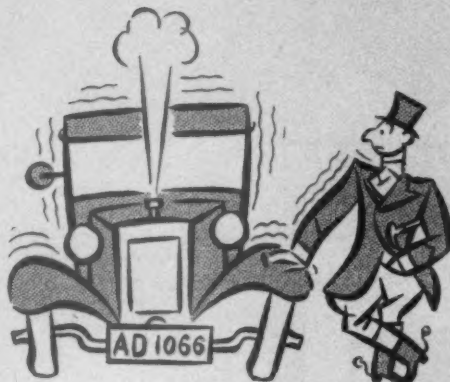
"ARTIFICIAL WOOL.
JAPAN EVOLVES NEW YARN."
Evening Post, N.Z.

That one about not being at war will take a lot of beating.

★ ★ ★

"If every ordinary person in this world wants peace, what will be the result?" asks a pacifist. We shall have to ask Germany.

VOL. CXCV



"I had to screw up my courage to appear in public wearing a monocle," says a correspondent. His eye, of course, was screwed up already.

★ ★ ★

"During last week's war scare, while gas masks were being assembled and distributed in —, the Town Clerk and other officials of the Council slept at the Town Hall from Monday till Friday."—*Local Paper.*

And then they woke up and found there wasn't a war after all.

★ ★ ★

The recent news bulletins broadcast in foreign languages have aroused great interest in Germany. It is rumoured that HITLER would now like a plebiscite in Broadcasting House.

★ ★ ★

Muffin-men appeared in one London suburb blowing cornets. The idea, we understand, is to declare the season open with a flourish of crumpets.

★ ★ ★

"The amount of money spent in public-houses in a year would pay the National Debt," says a prohibitionist. Ah! but who would pay for the drinks?

★ ★ ★

"If enough people want a thing to happen it will happen," said a lecturer recently. Has he never heard of the favourite losing?

★ ★ ★



According to a doctor, work before breakfast can be harmful. He says nothing however about the intervals between meals.

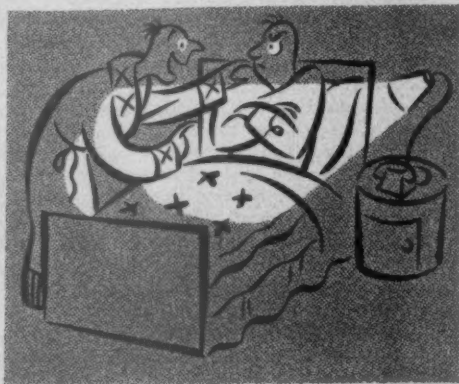
★ ★ ★

"We did everything to be adequately defended. Our military chiefs placed our faces in a position to fulfil their supreme duty to the country."—*Daily Paper.*

Inside gas-masks, do they mean?

★ ★ ★

Of a well-known American comedian it is said that wherever he goes he is accompanied by men thinking out jokes for his new shows. He always has his wits about him.





IT IS REPORTED THAT THE GOVERNMENT SPENT TWO MILLION POUNDS ON SAND DURING THE CRISIS.

Letters to Officialdom

XXV.—*Re College Dinner*

To the Dean, Carfax College, Oxford.

DEAR SIR,—I don't know whether or not you will remember me. I went up to Carfax from Boeotia College in '06, stayed up till '10, played chess for the College and took Honours in Chiropody (Dimensional Chiropody). This is asking you to cast your mind back a long way, I'm afraid, so let me add that at the college quinquenary celebrations last year I was the man to whom you talked for ten minutes about paleontology under the impression that my name was Jerks or Works—I forget which.

I am writing to you now because I have just received intimation that the College Association dinner is to be held this month. Unfortunately I have mis-

laid the notice, which bears the Secretary's name and address, and am hoping therefore that you will be able to give me the information I want.

What I should like to know first of all is: Why has the Sanspareil Hotel again been chosen for the dinner? I know of several hotels where one can get as good a dinner at half the price charged by the Sanspareil. There is one in Shepherds Bush, very easy to find if one knows Shepherds Bush, where the *table d'hôte* dinner is only 3/6, or 4/- with coffee. Twelve shillings and sixpence, exclusive of wine, is to my way of thinking simply iniquitous. We are only in one room all the time, and on such occasions as these one room looks very much like another. What I mean is, one very soon forgets where one is. At least I do.

Besides, the dining-room of the hotel I have in mind is not panelled with mirrors (as is the room we always

have at the Sanspareil). Consequently one does not keep catching sight of oneself at intervals during the meal, which—especially in the later stages of the meal—depresses me exceedingly and doubtless too depresses you. The impression I always get at the Sanspareil during these dinners is the impression of being in two rooms, and everything else looks double also, which is most confusing.

Another objection I have to the Sanspareil is the arrangement of the tables in E-formation, which enables the less mannerly members of the Association—Colonial servants usually—to aim things at one's head from behind without fear of detection. This is a practice I strongly deprecate, particularly as I once sustained a contused ear, caused by a bread-roll which also upset the half-bottle of Empire Burgundy I allow myself on these occasions. This necessitated my order-

ing another half-bottle, after which, succumbing for a moment to temptation, I tried to attract the attention of General Sir Walter Corduroy-Breeks by throwing an india-rubber, not directly at him as I meant to do, but at his reflection in one of the mirrors.

Afterwards I went up to old Corders, as we called him, and apologised. He took it very well and talked to me at some length about mirages in the Punjab, of which the incident had seemingly reminded him. Then I told him the joke about the mirage and the nautch-girl, which tickled him immensely. He capped it, however, with the one about the subahdar, the sirdar and the purdah. All this just shows what splendid opportunities these dinners offer for illuminating intercourse and the exchange of reminiscences.

It was at this same dinner that I had a long chat with Judge Wiggins—old Wiggers, as we called him—about College chess in our time, and how we beat Keble in the finals of the College Championship, on which memorable

occasion Wiggers declined the Keble captain's Queen's Knight's Pawn gambit and substituted a defence of his own. Dear old Wiggers! He was always doing things like that.

This brings me to my second question. Can you tell me if Corders and Wiggers will be at the dinner this year, and if Evan Bracegirdle (or Bracers, as we called him), John Pemmican (or Pemmors, as we called him), and Dickie Bramham (or Brammers, as we called him) will be there also? I should very much like to sit with Corders and Wiggers and Bracers and Pemmors and Brammers if this can be arranged.

I should be interested also to know if you, Sir, intend dwelling on the menace of the juggernaut of industry in Oxford, or on the Corporation's latest building schemes, or on palæontology when you give your customary speech on College activities during the past year. If you care to mention that I have written two books this year (one about philately and the other about dimensional chiropody), published at 5/- each by Pigg and Whistle, I should be very grateful to you. The personal

touch means so much, especially when people are in a sentimental mood. So far the sales have been rather poor—doubtless owing to the crisis.

Perhaps you would also be good enough to let me know why Admiral Sir Ian Broadside-Grapeshot has been invited to take the Chair this year? Broadside-Grapeshot was twice nearly sent down during my term for attempting (both times unsuccessfully) to place a sugar-basin on top of the chapel spire, and I do not think it fitting that a man with such a record should be honoured in this way. Why wasn't Wiggers invited? Are the College authorities still prejudiced against him just because he plastered advertising posters all over the Clarendon Buildings one night? If this be the reason, I am disgusted.

Yours very truly,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—Please let me know soon if you think the hotel in Shepherds Bush might suit. I know the proprietor as George and could obtain preferential terms.



"AND ARE YOU INVARIABLY COURTEOUS TO ANIMALS?"

The Uses of Adversity

WHAT are we going to do with our gas masks? That is the question which should be racking England at the moment. I know the Home Office imagines that we are going to wrench them away from our little children or tear them from off their hooks near the boiler to place them tidily in cardboard boxes ready for the next "national emergency." That is manifestly absurd. Waste not, want not, should surely be our motto in these hard times, and to hoard anything, even a gas mask, in a state of mouldering inactivity, must be wrong.

Now the British housewife is notoriously imaginative. There is practically nothing that she will not turn into something else if given half the chance—indeed the whole structure of the Women's Institute movement is based on such prestidigitation. In the culinary line her life is one constant endeavour to turn the remains of the beef into rissoles, and the wide world over there is none so adept at turning blanc-manges into various shapes. Of course when it comes to turning old stockings into old gloves or ham-bones into razor-strops her ingenuity assumes almost visionary proportions.

With this knowledge in mind I spent last week approaching various women (indeed not only did I approach but I actually reached most of them) to discover whether they had turned themselves or their thoughts to the mask problem. I was amazed and hurt to find that they had not. Apparently and for no good reason that I could perceive they were under the delusion they were meant to wear them.

Women, this won't do. You are not facing facts. You know perfectly well that in peace-time we are *not supposed* to wear our gas masks. We look quite silly enough in our hats as it is. That does not mean to say that the masks should lie idle. Far from it. They were given to us by the Government for a purpose, and to a purpose they *must* be put. Of course we don't mean to be unpatriotic, do we? But we are thoughtless, which amounts to the same thing. If perhaps—and this is only a suggestion—we all took a vow to listen-in somewhat less to the mighty Wurlitzer from the Tooting Granada and use our brains somewhat more we should become worthier citizens. What do you think?

That is enough scolding for one day, I am sure you will agree, but if my appeal has touched your finer feelings in the slightest will you please atone

for past slackness by showing me something of your creative ability? You are all bursting with ideas, you know, if only you would let them express themselves: Here are *my* ideas as to what to do with your gas masks, and I shall be so interested to hear of yours in return.

A WORKBAG

Remove the existing straps, thriftily putting the detached safety-pins into a box marked "Safety Pins" (if this is not available simply put them into a box). Taking a bodkin, thread some coloured ribbon, preferably tri-coloured, round the top of the mask, leaving sufficient lengths at either end to loop into handles. Line the inside with some gay material, say green baize. Suspend your wools or cotton-reels on the rubber chin-strap. An amusing dodge is to stick your needles into the gauze attached to the nozzle. They will disappear completely, I'm afraid.

JAPANESE LANTERN

Opening one of the two-dozen boxes of candles you bought on September 26th, remove as many candles as you have gas masks handy (or facey, as my little daughter so wittily remarked). Glue, by the usual painful method, a candle into the centre of each mask. When these are lit and hung about the rooms and garden, the flames will glow cheerily through the talc windows. The effect is indescribably dainty.

FLOWER-POT

Stiffen one side of the mask by inserting wire insertions. If you can-

not manage this by yourself, the nearest umbrella-maker can. Which does not mean to say he will. The off or non-existent side must be fashioned anew. Either old strips of mackintosh or strips of old mackintosh liberally interlarded with adhesive tape will do the trick. Fill the mask with fibre, sludge, silt or just plain mud. Plant therein your spring bulbs or a favourite fern, and hang same on plaits of coloured bass in your window. Small plants are preferable, as the larger growths, such as the aspidistra or the cactus, show a tendency to heel over, as well of course as completely shutting out the light. To moisten, lower the mask and place it nozzle downwards in a saucer. You will find the water percolates through in a wonderfully satisfactory fashion, usually oozing right over the saucer on to the carpet. This enables the plant to breathe. If, however, owing to the intolerable fug in which it lives, it should breathe too heavily, the talc window (through which it is so interesting to study Mother Nature at work) will become misted over. To guard against this apply a little soap—not carbolic, please—to the inside of the window.

PHOTOGRAPH FRAME

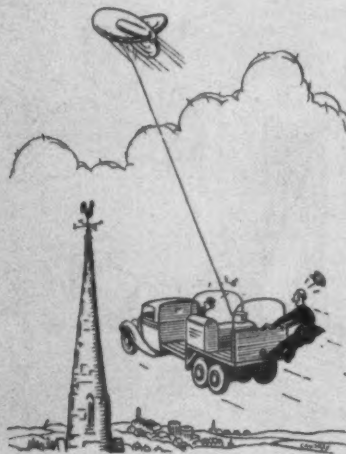
In place of the centre strap nail on to the rubber a thin slat or sliver of wood. This should hold the front portion of the mask firmly erect, providing of course that it is long enough to reach something other than air. Taking a piece of cardboard of the same breadth as the mask, paste on to it a snapshot of some loved one, or perhaps several loved ones. Insert this at the rear of the mask, some two inches away from the window, taking care, naturally, to see that the picture is facing outwards, and that it is also the right way up. The effect will be instantaneous. Not only will the figures appear to be amusingly out of proportion, but they will also be suffused with that faded yellow glow we always associate with our oldest and tenderest memories. Groups or horizontal scenery prove the most successful subjects, as portraits, unless they are portraits of people lying down, leave unsightly gaps round the edges.

V. G.

Impending Apology

"He was at the age of 24 in London studying the sociological aspects of the drink problem, to be seen daily in the reading room of the British Museum."—*Irish Paper*.

"Swanage, Dorset.—Christian home. Few guests deceived."—*Advt. in Church Weekly*. Could you state the exact percentage?



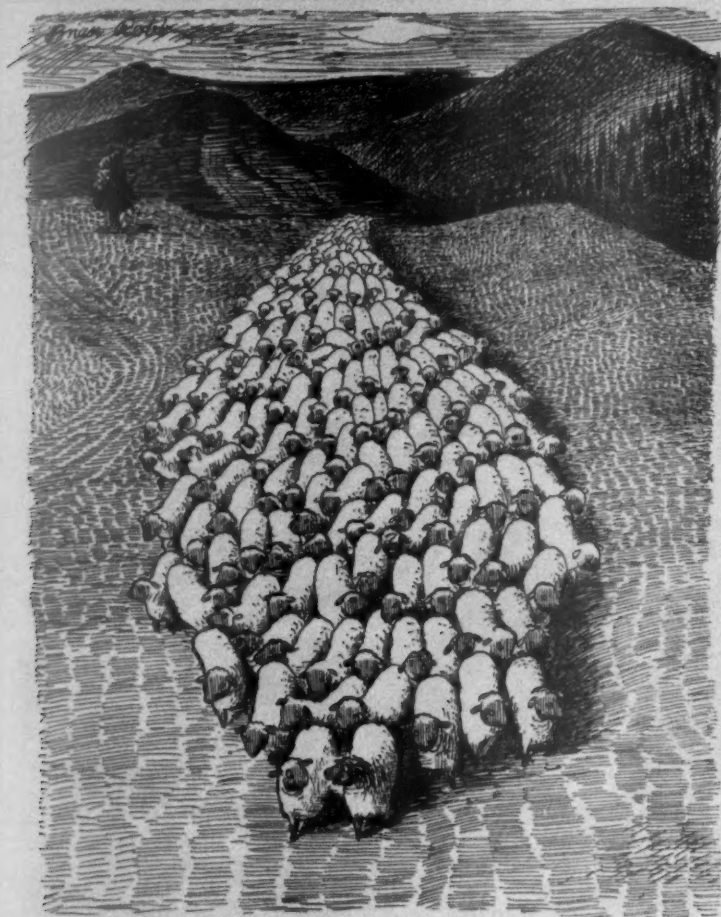
"KEEP TO THE LEFT, BEST."



ANOTHER NATIONAL MOTOR SHOW

Mr. Punch. "This is the stand that interests me most this year."

[The Territorials are to be equipped and reorganised on the same lines as the Regular Army.]



"SHALL WE LEAD THEM ASTRAY?"

Wedding Bells

HERE comes the bride,
Pale and misty-eyed,
Just as though she'd rather
Never leave Father.
There goes the page
At the awkward age,
Treading on their feet;
Isn't he too sweet?
Now the ugly sisters,
Seeming to have blisters,
And the slinky friend,
Mincing at the end.
Oh, whatever made
Hester have that shade?
Nothing really goes
With their so-and-soes;
None of it is fair
To their sort of hair.
Now the thing is through:

Both have said they do.
Here comes the bride,
And by her side,
If there is room,
Here comes the groom.
Parents arm-in-arm
Trying to look calm
And at ease despite
Skirts that are too tight,
Covering their cloth
Where it has the moth,
Seeing that their smile
Lasts out the aisle.
Here comes the aunt
Who *would* choose the chant;
And here come the rest,
Rather over-dressed,
Rescuing their veils
With vermilion nails.
Here comes the train
Out into the rain
Through the regiment
On into the tent.

As it goes it catches
Cigarettes and matches.
Here they must stand
Hand in every hand.
Please kiss the bride
Only on the side.
Here comes the cake,
How much must we take?
Followed by the fizz—
Is that all there is?
Here's the best man
Doing what he can
To pray silence for
Some abysmal bore
Out to make the most
Of the dear old toast—
"May the happy pair
Be allowed to share
This and that and those . . ."
On and on he goes,
Saying it all doubly,
Being full of bubbly.
Now up the stair
(No, dear, not in there),
Presents by the score
Clutter up the floor;
Something from the staff
Seems to be in half.
Who has put my mug
Underneath that rug?
They swore they liked mine
Best of twenty-nine.
Please open wide,
Here comes the bride
Lovely as a myth,
Now Mrs. Smith,
Looking rather chic
In a suit of brick,
Buffeted along
By the teeming throng,
Petals by the peck
Silting up her neck.
People standing near
Quietly spill a tear;
Mr. Smith, who's nearer,
Takes her to Madeira.
Now that they have left
Parents are bereft.
Must we say Good-bye?
Had we better try?
Better let them be,
Nobody will see.
Leave them to their fate;
Let poor father wait
Patiently until
Here comes the bill.

Reassurance

"HONESTLY, Miss Littlebug, I *really* think it's all right. But if you're nervous let me stop in the village on my way home and see if the asthmatic Miss Dodge would come and stay the night with you."

"Not on any account, dear. Besides, I'm not in the least nervous."

"But I thought you said——"

"Dear, I only said I thought I heard a noise last night in the middle of the night, and it sounded to me exactly like somebody breaking in, and then looking carefully round at all the silver and deciding to *hide* and creeping behind the door with a revolver, and then just simply *waiting*. I distinctly heard heavy breathing and a noise like someone wearing hob-nailed boots. He kept on shifting about, and he must have looked at everything in the house—valuing them, I suppose—because the little silver pig on the right-hand side of my desk had been moved to the left and one of my dear mother's brass candlesticks had a thumb-mark on the base. And the man himself had disappeared."

"Disappeared, Miss Littlemug? Like the Invisible Man?"

"Not in the least, dear. Because I heard him go. It was still the middle of the night, when suddenly there was a tremendous crash. And I said to myself, '*What is that? It must be burglars.*' That's all I said. '*What is that? It must be burglars.*' And then I distinctly heard a low muttering and some heavy footfalls, and then a noise as if something was being dragged along the floor for *miles*, and then more crashes. It was quite unmistakable."

"Was it really?"

"Yes, quite. I knew what it was directly."

"And what was it, Miss Littlemug?"

"Dear, I've just been telling you. It couldn't have been anything else. Burglars. Probably armed. They sounded armed to me."

"Then I really think that the asthmatic Miss Dodge——"

"No, no; she seldom gets a good night, poor thing, and I shouldn't dream of disturbing her. Besides, I'm not in the least nervous. Not really."

"You didn't, I suppose—of course I'm sure you didn't, but just in case you did—did you by any unlikely chance *miss* anything this morning?"

"No, dear, nothing whatever. I didn't really expect to."

"I see."

"But at the same time the little silver pig *had* been moved, and there was something very odd about the mark at the base of that candlestick. (It's a solid brass one, antique, and probably worth a great deal of money, although unfortunately the fellow to it got lost when I moved from Wimbledon.) But of course it's well known that these people work methodically. They come and take a good look round one night and find out the easiest ways of getting in and out, and then *next* time the whole gang comes."

"Well, I hope they won't, Miss Littlemug. I've never heard of any burglaries in this neighbourhood. Are you sure you wouldn't like——?"

"Certain, thank you, dear. I'm not in the least nervous."

"And you've got the cook."

"Ah, she never hears anything. Only last week, at about eight in the evening, there was a tremendous knocking at the door, quite as if somebody was trying to batter it in, and I thought to myself, '*A murderer forcing an entrance,*' and got behind the piano. But Mrs. Jugg never heard a sound. I asked her next morning. It turned out to be a boy with a note, but she never heard a sound."

"But, Miss Littlemug, if you don't mind my saying so, I honestly don't

think that a murderer would make any noise at all if he could help it, or a burglar either. You see, they don't really want to draw attention to themselves after all."

"Perhaps you're right, dear. I hadn't thought of that."

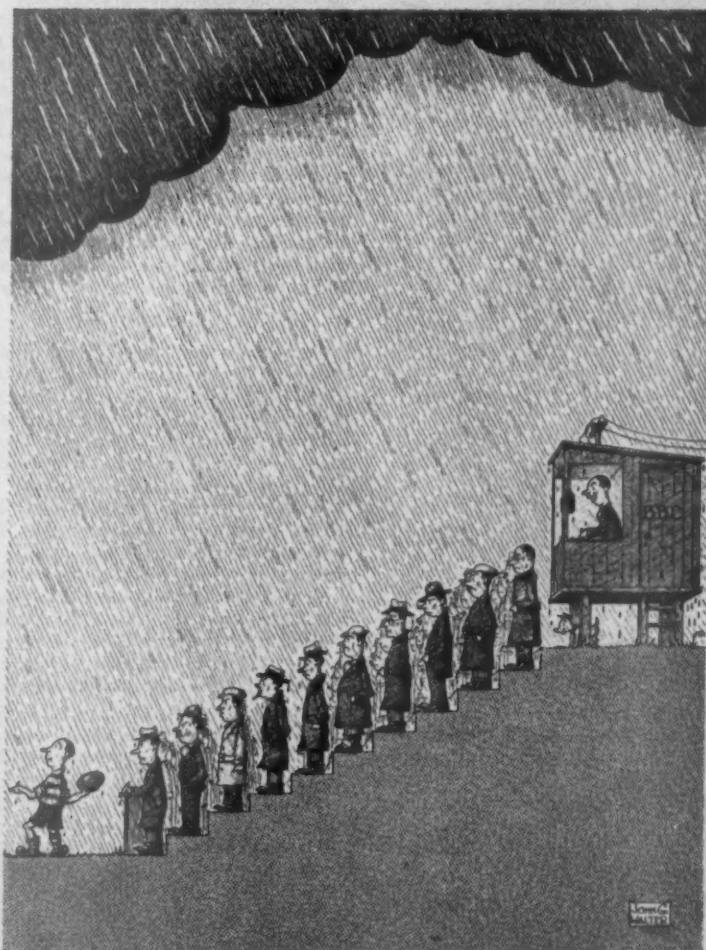
"Do think of it now, and don't let yourself fancy these dreadful things. Good-night, Miss Littlemug."

"Good-night, dear, and thank you. You've been *most* comforting."

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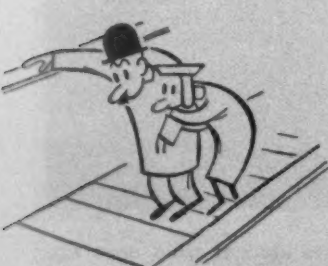
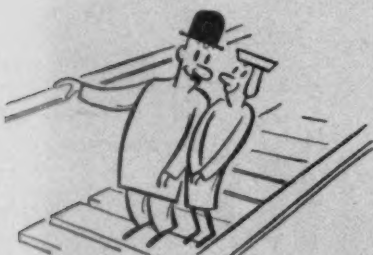
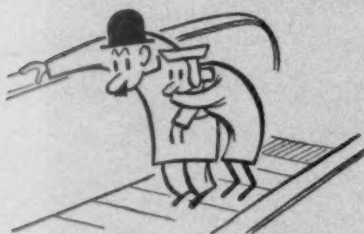
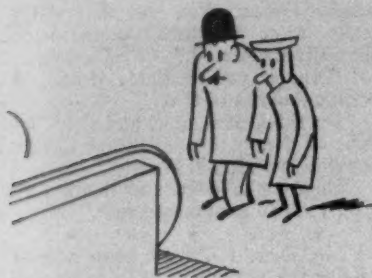
"No, dear, I did *not* have a good night. It's very nice of you to ring up and ask, but I can only say I practically never closed my eyes all night. I just lay there, listening to the silence and remembering how you said *they never make a sound.*"

E. M. D.



"WELL, WE'RE CERTAINLY LUCKY; CONDITIONS ARE JUST ABOUT IDEAL FOR A GREAT FORWARD RATTLE."

Barratry and the Whole Truth



THERE is a story told in the shipping trade of a beginner in the business who on his first morning approached the head of his department and asked him what a Captains' Manifest was. The veteran, bestowing upon him a look of incredulity at such extravagant ignorance, replied, "The manifest that goes in the ship's tin, of course," and turned away.

From most people nowadays that story will, I fear, meet with an unenthusiastic reception; but I can assure you that many a shipbroker of the old school laughed so much on first hearing it that he fell off the quay. This in part accounts for the disappearance of the old school of shipbrokers, few of whom were able to swim, and their replacement by men of an altogether different type; and to this extent the story with which this article opens may be said to be responsible for Empire Free Trade and, in a lesser degree, the Boer War. But we are wandering from the point. What I was intending to convey by the anecdote quoted above was the general maxim that it is foolish to expect one's audience to know everything. A writer in particular must always credit his readers with even less knowledge than they actually possess. I therefore do not propose to assume that the term

BARRATRY

is universally understood. And since a definition of the term in my own words could only add to the prevailing ignorance and confusion on the subject I have extracted a short passage from STEVENS' *Mercantile Law* which reads:

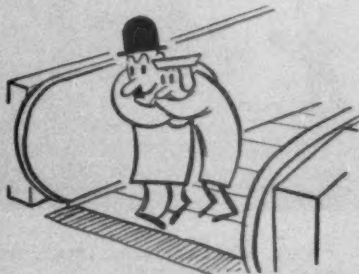
"Barratry is any wrongful or malicious act of the master or crew, by which damage is caused; thus for instance setting fire to the vessel, or sinking her, would be barratrous acts."

Few, if any, of my readers will deny, I imagine, that the acts cited by the learned STEVENS would be barratrous in the extreme; but the intelligent layman might be tempted to add that

they would be not only barratrous but foolhardy (especially if performed in mid-ocean); and that the contingency of barratry is one against which it is vain and unnecessary to provide. Nothing, however, could be further from the truth. Every article of goods transported from New York to Southampton is accepted by the shipowners on the express condition that barratry does not count. Should the master of the *Queen Mary*, two days out from New York, suddenly call for a pneumatic drill and proceed to puncture the hull at various places below the waterline, what time the crew poured petrol on the decks and flung lighted matches about, those members of the public who had recklessly entrusted their merchandise to her hold would have no legal remedy whatever. Lest it should be thought that the Cunard-White Star Line have a peculiarly evil reputation in this respect, I hasten to add that the same clause applies to goods shipped from Bournemouth to Freshwater Bay, I.O.W. It is, in fact, universal, and its adoption is due partly, no doubt, to the instability of character which popular tradition assigns to seafaring men of all sorts and degrees, but principally to the almost incredible caution of the shipowner.

You must understand that the clause under discussion (which we may, for the sake of brevity and without prejudice, refer to henceforward as the Anti-Barratry Clause) is printed in deceitfully minute characters on the back of the receipt or Bill of Lading which the careful merchant always obtains for his goods. I say "receipt," but, compared with a common non-barratrous receipt, a Bill of Lading is more like a distraint for non-payment of taxes. Barratry is not by any means the only contingency provided for; it is not even the most improbable. The shipowners disclaim all responsibility for (to use their own words)—

"Heeling over, upsetting, sinking or



submerging of the vessel; fumigation or any other act of the Sanitary Authorities, whether in the ship's hold, on craft, or on shore; vermin, rain, snow, fresh water, salt water, sea water . . .

Here the Bill of Lading soars into dizzy heights of redundancy, whither we shall not attempt to follow it. Let us instead notice in the following passage the passionate determination of the owners to preserve a freedom of action more complete than anything yet known—

"The ship to be at liberty to proceed by any route and deviate from or change the advertised, scheduled or intended route, at any stage of the voyage, and to proceed toward, or to, or enter and stay at, or return to, any ports or places whatsoever, including the port of shipment, although not customary, or scheduled, or advertised ports or places of call, or although in a contrary direction to, or outside of, or beyond the usual route to the port of destination, once or oftener, in any order, backwards or forwards, for any purpose whatsoever."

It will be seen that this clause gives considerable scope to a moderately inventive captain, who would be at perfect liberty, if he so wished, to sail his ship up the Matterhorn for the purpose of taking on a cargo of toy balloons. Nor must it be supposed that in such a case the owners of the merchandise on board could refuse to pay the freight charges. Their specious and illogical plea that since their goods had not, in fact, been transported to the desired place they should not be expected to pay for such transportation would be immediately swept aside by the grand paragraph on the Bill of Lading headed "Payment," which lays it down that—

"Freight and charges as indicated herein, whether prepaid or collect, shall be deemed fully and irrevocably earned upon shipment and shall be paid forthwith without deduction or refund under any circumstances whatsoever, ship or goods lost or not lost, even if the voyage is not begun."

The italics are mine.

In the circumstances it is a matter for pleasurable surprise that anyone is sufficiently trusting as to attempt to send merchandise from one place to another by ship; and it says much for the goodwill of the shipping companies and the tact and sense of their employees that such cases as that of the liner *Snark* (owned by Lewis and Carroll and the West Indies) should be the exception rather than the rule. The master of the *Snark*, Captain Boojum,

after taking on board a large mixed cargo at Kingston, Jamaica, suddenly declared his intention of seizing, confiscating, destroying and throwing it overboard; shipping it at owner's risk and expense over the Isthmus of Panama (thence to be forwarded to destination by another vessel); immersing the Sanitary Authorities in rain, snow, fresh water, salt water and sea water; heeling over, upsetting, sinking and submerging; and not beginning the voyage. Inspection of the Bill of Lading showed that he was clearly entitled to do any or all of these

things, once or oftener, in any order, backwards or forwards; and it was only at the expense of a considerable sum of money that he was persuaded to forgo his legal rights in the matter. Such cases, however, are fortunately rare; and even

BARRATBY (q.v.)

is fast becoming a thing of the past.

Another Victory for Common Sense
"GROUND RECORD BROKEN WITH LIGHT
HAMMER."

The Scotsman.



"I HEAR SOMEONE'S ADDING A NEW CHAPTER TO HISTORY."

At the Pictures

PYGMALION, ALEXANDER, ETC.

Pygmalion is doomed always, I suppose, to give audiences the perfectly justified impression that the Cockney dialect at the beginning, not the careful English of the rest, is what has been laboriously learnt by the actress who plays *Eliza*; and the latest version, an enjoyable, very amusing and in some ways brilliant film, is no exception in that rather important particular. In the Covent Garden scene WENDY HILLER never succeeds in convincing us that her accent will be any harder to get rid of than her old hat, and even the irrepressible "Eaouw" (I forget how Mr. SHAW spelt it) emerges as little more than an energetic "Ow."

But never mind. Even those simple-witted persons who still, after all these years, go to *Pygmalion* solely in order to be able to loose off a delighted yell at *Eliza's* celebrated word (which passed absolutely unnoticed by a large audience at another film a month or two ago, by the way) can hardly fail to take delight in the whole picture. The tea-party scene I'm sure can never have been funnier. The principals are very good; all the small parts are well taken; the settings, apart from one or two obviously faked backgrounds, are excellent; and the cameramen, by one device or another, have managed to inject motion and visual interest into some of Mr. SHAW's most maddeningly static scenes. A text worth listening to made without sacrifice into a picture worth looking at provides one of the most encouragingly good British films for years.

Few people can now be unaware that *Alexander's Ragtime Band* consists very largely of a lot of IRVING BERLIN's tunes, and that the story is little but an excuse for stringing them together. For that very reason I feel entitled to complain of the seriousness with which we are apparently supposed to take the plot. It's no good, I cannot at this late date work up any profound emotion about the young married couple who bravely agree, over highballs, that it will be best for them to part; or about the singer who bravely sings with tears in her eyes; or about the heroine who hears the hero broadcasting to her (even though this time she is in a taxi for the occasion); or about any other items from that stack of conventions which have been dear to the makers of musical films for so much, much too long. What

I liked about *Alexander's Ragtime Band* was to hear ALICE FAYE and ETHEL MERMAN, among others, singing those popular tunes; and after all that is all you need like to enjoy the picture.

The music itself is treated intelli-



PHONETICS

Higgins LESLIE HOWARD
Eliza WENDY HILLER

gently: some of the famous tunes are made the basis of spectacular scenes, but others are used as a muted background for action. And if you have noticed any popular music at all since



JOYS OF RADIO IN A TAXI

Stella Kirby ALICE FAYE

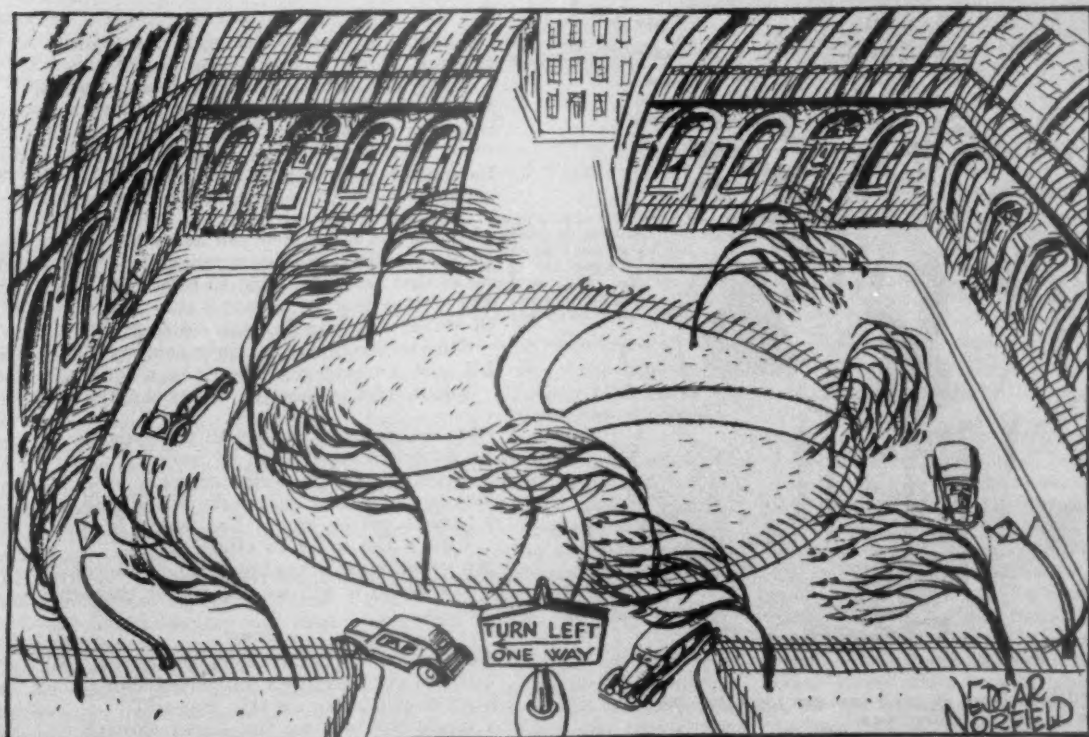
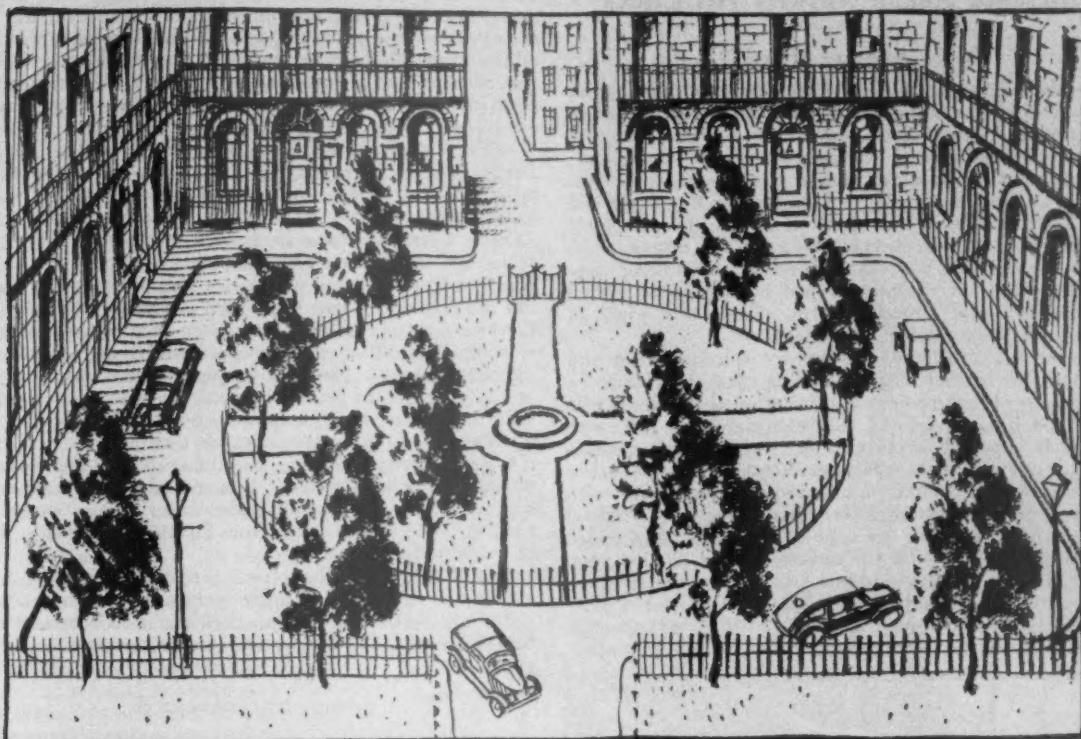
1911 you will find this film bungful of associations.

The latest HITCHCOCK work is *The Lady Vanishes*, and a more light-hearted one than usual. True, Mr.

HITCHCOCK is still preoccupied with murder and espionage in relation to everyday life; true, there are moments of great excitement and extraordinary suspense in this story about the attempts of a girl and a young man to trace an old lady who disappeared from a Continental express; but there are also moments of roaring farce, and quite a number of them too. For these we have to thank as fine a pair of imperturbable Englishmen as ever stormed the screen. These gentlemen (BASIL RADFORD and NAUNTON WAYNE) wish to get home in time for the Test Match at Manchester, and they will do anything to avoid difficulties which might delay them. They are astonishingly funny.

MARGARET LOCKWOOD is the girl and MICHAEL REDGRAVE, a very competent newcomer, the young man; they both do well. Dame MAY WHITTY is the old lady, a part she could play convincingly behind a ground-glass screen in a thick fog. Among the other talented people involved is PAUL LUKAS; I don't remember his having played so villainous a character since *City Streets* six years ago, but perhaps I'm wrong.

Other interesting phenomena of the fortnight include *Having Wonderful Time*, which I gather has lost some of the overtones or undertones of the stage play from which it is adapted but still retains more than most films and allows GINGER ROGERS to be a joy as usual; *Abus de Confiance*, in which the versatile DANIELLE DARRIEUX gives another beautiful performance in a film that would be excellent but for the theatrical trick by which it is given its climax; *Prison sans Barreaux*, the original French version of the British *Prison Without Bars*, and not so much better as I expected (though either version is worth seeing); *Hey! Hey! U.S.A.*, a lively WILL HAY picture containing far too many imitation Americans (and I don't ever again want to be asked to laugh at an Englishman's literal interpretation of American slang) but also a few genuine ones, including the magnificent EDGAR KENNEDY; and Mr. COCHRAN's two-hour review of the history of the cinema, *Flashbacks*. This last is inclined to overlook some of the most memorable things, but contains a great deal of fascinating stuff. R. M.



Well-known Author Answers His Critics

To the Editor of "Punch"

SIR,—As I have been widely attacked not only in the Press but from the pulpit for a recent reference to foreign policy and the oyster-trade, may I be permitted to give in your columns a brief explanation of the true facts? The statement which I am alleged to have made (in the course of an address to fishermen on Bognor Regis pier last Friday) is that the present trend of British foreign policy as exemplified at Munich spells ruin for the oyster-trade. What I actually said was that as a result of the Conference at Munich especial vigilance would be needed to ensure the preservation of British oysters. There is a world of difference between the two statements.

In common, I believe, with every thinking man and woman in the British Empire and beyond, I extended a full measure of gratitude and admiration to the man who alone stood between us and the nightmare of a European war. That I should be accused now, when the immediate danger is over, of making a mean attack upon the Prime Minister, that I should be represented as charging him with the sabotaging of British interests in general and British oysters in particular for the sake of a settlement of which expediency is admittedly the keystone—and all this upon the ground of a solitary sentence, woefully misunderstood, fills me with horror and indignation. What I said, what I certainly wished to imply was that in view of a certain intransigence in the German attitude at Munich and after-

wards it would be folly to adopt an attitude of complacent thankfulness in the belief that oysters had been finally saved from the disruptive influences of war. How this, the dictate of simple prudence, can be regarded as a criticism of the Prime Minister passes my comprehension. It is in fact no more and no less than an echo of the Government's own insistence on the need for continued precautionary efforts—or, to use my own word, vigilance.

What I suggest, what I actually suggested at Bognor Regis, as some of my critics would have discovered had they troubled to read my speech as a whole instead of extracting a solitary observation from its context and wilfully misrepresenting it, is that measures for the protection of one of our staple industries should be put in hand and put in hand at once. The necessary measures fall roughly under two heads: (a) An undertaking by the Government not to disturb the oyster-beds by the proximity of submarine-cables, minesweepers, low-flying aircraft and balloons, etc. (b) Adequate arrangements to warn oysters of the approach of hostile bombing planes. It is common knowledge that a high-explosive bomb falling into a bed of unprepared oysters would cause terrible havoc, whereas if every oyster took care to close and seal his shell in advance casualties would be reduced to a minimum. The sounding in ample time of, say, an under-water bell in every bed threatened by hostile action from the air might save millions of valuable bivalves.

It is my firm belief that once it is realised on the Continent that at the first hint of danger every native of these islands is determined to retire into his shell and remain hermetically sealed up until the danger is over, no nation will dare to attack us.

Yours etc., H. F. E.

Ballade of Utter Wintry Gloom

My flannel shirts can hardly make the grade
To ward off yet another winter's chill;
My woolly whatnots are bepatched and frayed;
My tweeds, for which I haven't paid the bill,
Have far too obviously been through the mill;
My overcoat is worn and, *entre nous*,
Its warmth-providing value's almost nil.
I doubt if it will see the winter through.

My little house is battered and decayed.
Look how the rain leaks through the window-sill!
Look at that roof! I've had to barricade
The attic ceiling to prevent a rill
Of water, and one day the staircase will
Collapse complete; it's only held by glue.
I'll raise a mortgage. That'll be a thrill!
I doubt if it will see the winter through.

I wish that I could manage to persuade
An aunt to die and leave by codicil
A whacking sum to be instanter paid,
Making me rich by one stroke of the quill.
I haven't got an aunt. I'm feeling ill.
I think I'm in for an attack of 'flu.
My constitution's heading straight downhill;
I doubt if it will see the winter through.

Envoi

Prince, you're supported from the nation's till;
I wish that poets were supported too.
I'll get a quid or so for this, but still
I doubt if it will see the winter through.



"I KNOW SOME OF THEM ARE RED ONES, MR. SCHULTZ, BUT IT ISN'T A COLOUR FILM."

Equipment

THE scoutmaster of the East End Troop of which I am a vice-president asked me to go down the other day and make an inventory of the equipment owned by the Tuesday Boys' Club, which he also runs, and which meets, after the light-hearted fashion of the East End, on Mondays and Fridays. It used to meet on Tuesday, but there was a fracas with the Sewing Guild in the next room owing to a large ball of wool being abstracted and used for hand-ball.

In order to give me some ideas for the inventory the scoutmaster invited me down one Friday.

"This is the best billiard-table," he said, "which you had better call the Number One table so as to save confusion. Only the older boys are allowed to use it because the younger ones might cut the cloth."

"It seems to be a bit ripped already," I pointed out.

"If you knew anything about the East End," he said rather scornfully, "you wouldn't call those little two-inch affairs rips. They hardly deflect the ball at all, and it would be a first-class table if it were not for the bump in the middle and if we had nets on the pockets."

I had not noticed the absence of nets, but at that moment a youth potted the red and it landed on my foot.

"You might have caught it," said the scoutmaster reproachfully. "It doesn't do the ball any good falling on the floor. The local rule is that the opponent of the fellow making the stroke rushes round the table to catch the balls as they fall, but you were in the way."

The second billiard-table was about half the size of a quarter-size table, but the balls used were full-size.

"An odd set," said the scoutmaster, "presented to us by one of our other vice-presidents. The only trouble with them is that they won't go in the pockets. The rule is that if they would have gone in the pocket if they were the right size it counts as a score; but I must admit that it leads to a good deal of controversy."

The third table, used by the smallest boys, had only three legs.

"The striker," explained the scoutmaster, "is allowed to tilt the table towards the bottom corner and thus coax the ball into the pocket. It isn't strictly billiards but it makes a good game. We used to have a rule against tilting the table, but it tempted players to lean on it sort of negligently."



"CHILDREN CALLING"

MR. PUNCH. "IT'S GETTING TALLER EVERY DAY, BUT WE NEED MORE HELP FROM KIND FRIENDS TO FINISH IT."

"Punch," November 4th, 1936.

What Mr. Punch said in 1936 still holds good to-day. Magnificent progress has been made with the rebuilding of the Hospital for Sick Children in Great Ormond Street, to which the King and Queen have just paid a visit in order to inspect the newly complete Medical and Surgical Block. But much remains to be done. Nearly half of the sum originally asked for has still to be raised, and Mr. Punch humbly begs his ever-generous readers once again to help this splendid cause. Donations may be sent to the Secretary, The Hospital for Sick Children, Great Ormond Street, London, W.C.1.

We passed on to the table-tennis department. The best table (reserved for boys over fifteen) was a splendid-looking affair.

"We thought it was good when one of our vice-presidents gave it to us," said the scoutmaster rather bitterly, "but the wood has some sort of disease, and there is a big patch at each end which is quite dead and the ball doesn't rise if you hit it. It gives us a big advantage when we play visiting teams."

The other table was very small, but even so it was too big for the remaining space of the room, and the player at the far end was squeezed against the

wall. "We make it as fair as we can," said the scoutmaster, "by changing ends at half-time; but fat boys are at a terrible disadvantage at the short end because they can hardly breathe."

Nearly all the equipment seemed to have been presented by vice-presidents, and I began to see why I had been given the job. The scoutmaster said that begging was against their principles, but that if I happened to have an odd table-leg I didn't want I might send it along. Anybody who presented a set of small-size billiard-balls, he added thoughtfully, would probably be elected President, but no doubt that was beyond my means.



Forte—Piano

'Twas at a local sale, a full-sized grand
 Stood up for offers; with impassioned skill
 The auctioneer acclaimed it from his stand,
 And not one voice responded; all were still.

Shamed to its bass, the instrument retired;
 And yet when good VICTORIA filled the throne
 It had importance; it was much admired
 For its appearance and its full rich tone.

A simple time, un-Bridged and long since dead,
 When after-dinner music wrought its charm,
 When many a bidden guest, intensely fed,
 Brought the shop-ballads out, nor thought it harm.

Strong men would up and bleat of Old Madrid
 Where softly sang of love the light guitar;
 Young maids would clear the flower-pots from the lid,
 And lightly deal with Chopin, bar by bar.

And there were nobler passages no doubt
 When some dishevelled artist took the floor
 And, all afire to beat his music out,
 Turned to, and gave that piano what for.

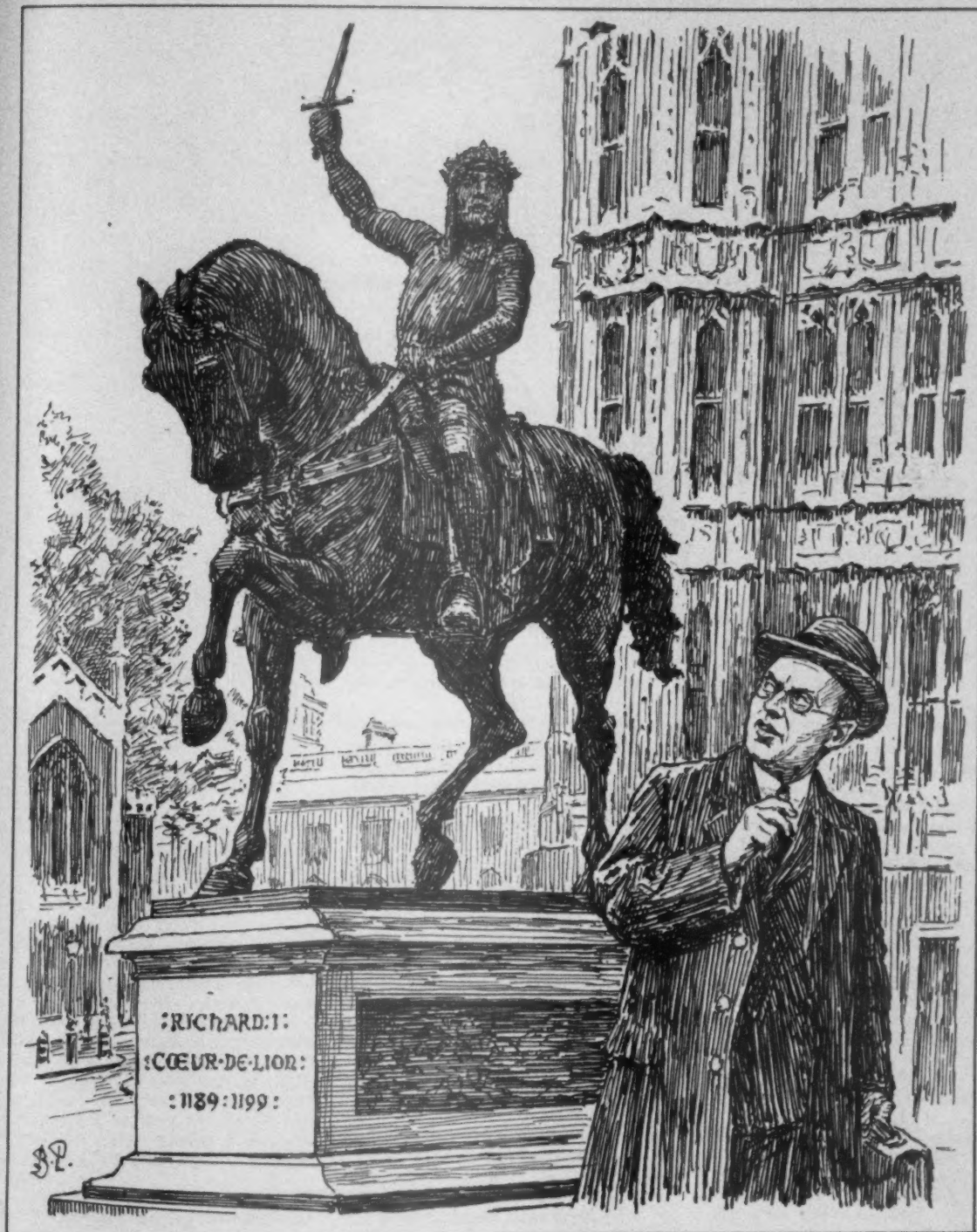
Nay, even though all unplayed and ever mute,
 It had its worth in those Victorian scenes
 Merely as evidence beyond dispute
 That its possessor was endowed with means.

But the times changed, and gramophones came in;
 Came too the wireless with incessant voice;
 Jazz, or what not, was served up by the tin;
 You turned the button and you took your choice.

The high-taxed homestead dwindled to a flat;
 There was no room for mammoths in the lift;
 Bad went to worse, and, what with this and that,
 Nobody now will have it as a gift.

Yet maybe in some dark-drawn lumber-room
 Through the deep night what whispering sounds are these?
 What soft ethereal music stirs the gloom?
 What ghostly fingers touch what faded keys?

None know. Such mysteries are for ever hid
 From the crude soul of man; yet, faint and far,
 Surely—oh, hear—that steals from Old Madrid?
 Is not this Chopin, tinkling bar by bar? DUM-DUM.



THE MARCH OF TIME

"What! still having trouble in Palestine?"



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"PARADISE, DID YE SAY? EH, MON, IT'S BETTER THAN THAT. IT'S MAIR LIKE THE GLESCA EXHIBITION!"

No Ink

I ALWAYS suspected there was no ink in my old pen because it wouldn't write; but with my new pen I shall know. I used to keep shaking my old one, hoping that this time there might be some ink if I shook long enough, and honour did not seem satisfied with less than ten shakes, and sometimes more. At five seconds or so a shake this amounted to several hours a day near Christmas and at such times. Sometimes I was brave and worked the little handle at the side. This showed at once whether there was any ink, and if you wanted to know how much you could mop it up from the carpet and measure it. But usually I was too frightened to use the handle and I just guessed.

All this will be changed with my new pen, because if you keep it washed out with water part of it is transparent and you can hold it up to the light and see at once and quite safely that there is no ink. It has a little button at the end for making certain, instead of the old handle, but I am sure I shall

never need it. In fact I don't know why they bothered to put the button there at all. Perhaps it is for people who can't see very well or who won't trouble to wash their pen regularly. But it has another feature I am even more delighted with: you don't need any fillers or handles or things like that, for you can dip it in the ink and use it just like an ordinary pen. I expect after I have washed it out and looked through it every day this is what I shall do. Or perhaps after all I shall be on the safe side and write with my typewriter, as I did when I had my old pen.

Lovely When It Leaves Off

(To be recited with monumental modesty in the British manner)

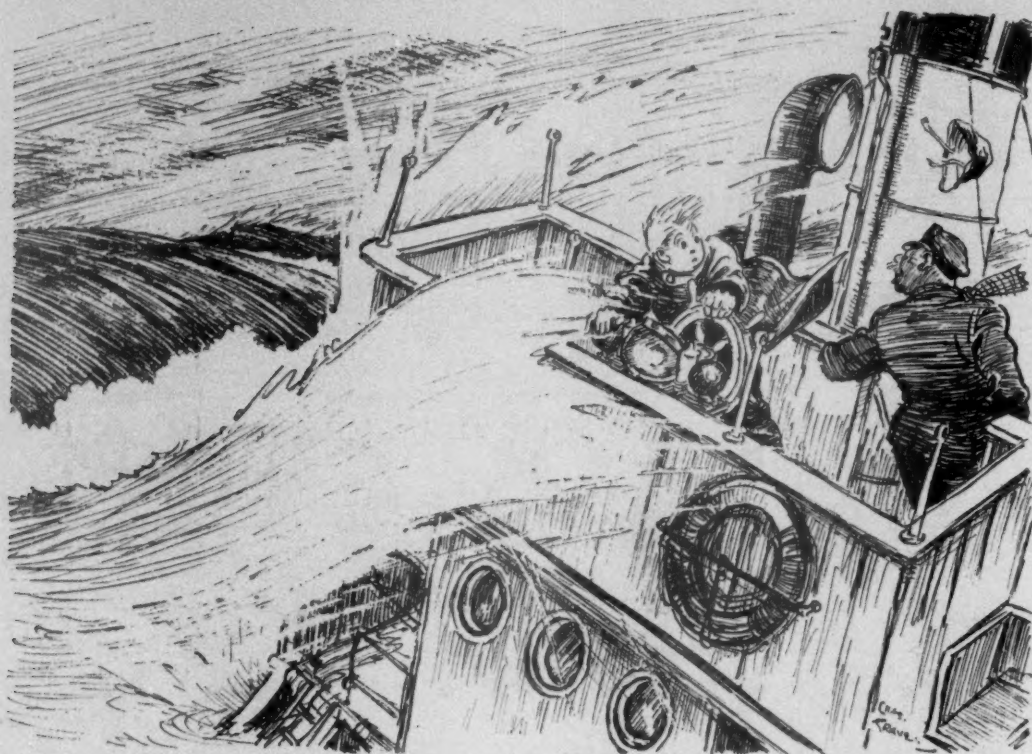
THE best of human races,
More diffident than most,
Whose calm no shock displaces,
Whose lips can frame no boast,
So bright, and yet not skittish,
So brave in face of woe—
I mean of course the British
(As if you didn't know)—

This people, it is stated,
Throughout the recent scare
Until the gloom abated
Turned not a single hair,
From those who scarce could dodder
Yet rushed to lend a hand,
To those with loads of fodder
Who disappeared inland.

Unmatched by other nations
Is our outstanding rule
In ticklish situations
Of always keeping cool;
"This trait we have not got," they
With deference agree,
"Has made the British what they
Believe themselves to be."

Perhaps I should not mention,
But hardly care to hide,
The fact that Times of Tension
Have their attractive side:
When danger is receding
And all, or most, is saved,
We never tire of reading
How nobly we behaved. R. M.

"Jumper suits or two-piece frocks are regaining their former popularity by leaps and bounds."—*The Times*.
You can't keep a good jumper down.



"SEA OVER THE BRIDGE! WELL, WHAT ABOUT IT? TELL ME WHEN IT'S OVER THE FUNNEL."

Al Fresco

You could tell he was an egg-merchant because, after his car had hit mine and cannoned into the gate on the other side, several hundred eggs decided at once to lodge a protest by leaving their shells in a body. They came pouring out of the back of his car in an angry stream of orange, took the grass bank in their stride, and spread slowly over the baking road, where they began to fry.

Apart from a cow which had been leaning over the gate and was never seen again, the only spectator of the drama was a policeman pedalling home to his lunch with a pipe in his mouth and his thoughts bent on good soup. He got off his bicycle reluctantly and leaned it against the gate. The egg-merchant, a large smiling man, climbed out of his seat and surveyed his shattered axle without rancour. Then he came over to me and offered his hand.

"A thousand pardons," he said. "For all the eggs in the world I would not have had this happen. Though I

had good reason to be a little gayer in my driving than was prudent, my carelessness was unforgivable. If I could restore the pressure in your off-front tyre with my own lungs I would gladly lend them, but as I observe there is now a large hole in it I fear I should only waste my breath."

The policeman joined us, stroking his moustache sadly.

"I might have known you were an egg-merchant," he said. "Half the crashes in France are due to the abominable driving of egg-merchants. The fact that the hen-population of the country is going up and with it the supply of eggs is a constant anxiety to the traffic authorities. Do you wish to make a charge, M'sieu?"

To my surprise I told him I did not.

"This man was on the wrong side of the road and singing loudly," the policeman said. "I wonder at your leniency."

"I wonder at it myself," I admitted.

"Previous and similar contretemps have never failed to plunge me into a bitter fury which I have not been slow to express."

"I think I can explain your ad-

mirable calm," said the egg-merchant. "Anger is not a single indivisible emotion, but rather the fountain-head of a general trend of minor feeling. By this I mean that a sudden burst of violent cholera is often released by a purely trivial incident, and is usually the result of a rapid series of small but irritating misfortunes which have established a sense of grievance in their subject. But on a day like this such troubles must pale into insignificance. The sun is shining as it has not shone for a week, the sky is bluer than the sea in the south, and in the breeze there is the sparkle of champagne. On such a day what are eggs, my friends, or for that matter a tyre?"

"There is something in what he says," the policeman declared.

"What lies on my conscience more heavily than your tyre," went on the egg-merchant, "is the thought that you will miss your lunch. It is a sad weakness in our design, otherwise so competent, that we can find no nourishment in happiness. The nearest village is ten kilometres away, and for that I cannot forgive myself."

For the first time he appeared

genuinely repentant. I looked at him again, and his broad brow and gentle dancing eyes made up my mind at once.

"There is no need to worry on that score," I said, "for I was about to picnic in any case, and as usual I have brought too much. In the back here is a *pâté de canard* and half-a-metre of bread and a Brie which is asking to be eaten. There's plenty for the three of us. All we are short on is drink. I have only one bottle of *rouge*."

The egg-merchant clapped his hands. "Heaven is kind!" he cried, "for I never set out on my rounds without a full bottle as a small insurance against disaster."

"Excuse me, M'sieu," murmured the policeman, "but did I overhear you to remark that the *pâté* was truffled?"

"It is," I assured him.

"I shall be delighted to accept, but first you must permit us to change your wheel," he said, and bowed from the waist. So did the egg-merchant. While they worked I unpacked the food, and we then made ourselves comfortable by the side of the road. I sat between my guests.

"Life is curiously uncertain," the egg-merchant observed, offering me the first swig at his bottle. "Had I chosen to come round that corner on the right side it is a million to one we three would never have met. I come from three valleys to the north from here, you from England, yet as an hors-d'œuvre to this altogether excellent repast our wheels lock on a little by-road scarcely on the map."

"It is indeed incomprehensible, but it is often the way," put in the policeman, through a mouth uncomfortably full of *pâté*. "Did I understand you to say you had some special cause for gaiety?"

"Have I not?" the egg-merchant cried. "My son was born last night. Already he is growing bigger and stronger. In a few short years he will be old enough to drive the eggs, and then at last I shall have time to put up my feet and ponder on the inscrutable mysteries of the natural laws."

"That is splendid news," exclaimed the policeman, removing his lips from the bottle. "And Madame is well?"

"Never better," the egg-merchant assured us.

"Their health!" I said, opening the second bottle and drinking. "And may the boy know as surely as his father when to drive on the wrong side of the road!"

"I am most grateful. For my wife and my son I thank you from my heart."

"I wish they were here," I said.



"WHAT IS IT, PLEASE? I'M IN CHARGE HERE!"

"How charming that would be!" the policeman murmured.

We all bowed informally in the way that old friends do whose mouths are full of Brie. For quite a long time there was silence while we finished our lunch. The second bottle went round to its death. Birds sang.

"I too," the policeman said suddenly, "have a light heart, for just now Monsieur Dernancourt took me on one side and told me that in a month's time I shall be a sergeant on account of my catching hold of the tail of the mad dog which was about to bite the mayor. It is a big step forward. Eh, my friend?"

He turned to the egg-merchant, but the egg-merchant was already fast asleep, sprawled along the bank with a smile playing across his broad brown face. He snored a little.

"Come," said the policeman, "let us leave him and send a breakdown lorry from the town. When a man sleeps like that it is a crime to wake him."

So together we crept away. ERIC.

"Serve with fried potatoes, and lettuce, tomato and diced beetroot all seasoned with French dressing—two part soil to one of vinegar, pepper and salt."

Recipe in Women's Paper.

Don't forget to remove the stones.

At the Play

"WHEN WE ARE MARRIED"
(ST. MARTIN'S)

I WONDER whether Yorkshire will readily forgive its gifted son for the portrait of the little town of Cleckleywyke which he has produced. Family photographers, arranging and taking their groups, seldom contrive to flatter everybody, but Mr. PRIESTLEY flatters nobody in this story, of which the idea first came to him, I surmise, while gazing at some wedding-group of the business-men of Yorkshire and their spouses. These are the people, he makes us feel, whom he encountered as a watchful and remembering boy thirty years ago, and what he has remembered has not mellowed with the years.

The play is broad and obvious farce. It turns on the consternation in a group of self-important leading chapel folk when, on their silver wedding celebration, they suddenly have reason to think that they were none of them ever properly married at all. The main business of the play is with their immediate reactions, their answers to the questions what to do next, how to hush the matter up, and it is only slowly that larger and more ambitious possibilities dawn on them with their new freedom. What is exhibited, and made very entertaining, is obviously only a small part of the possibilities of the theme. Mr. PRIESTLEY prefers to make play with the immediate situation before finally resolving it, and there are moments when we wonder how he will make the situation last through the three Acts. He has some useful sidelines. There is, first and foremost, the domestic staff of *Alderman Helliwell's* house, and especially *Mrs. Northrop*, played by Miss BEATRICE VARLEY in a way that underlines all that is least genial in Mr. PRIESTLEY's fun. In the conflict of mean natures *Mrs. Northrop* can give as good as she gets, and the only improbable moment is when she succumbs to that "girl lion of a man," the Rev. *Clement Mercer* (MR. NORMAN WOOLAND). The rest of the *Helliwell* household staff

is *Miss Ruby Birtle*, a Yorkshire skivvy. This part gave Miss PATRICIA HAYES a wonderful occasion to make a great hit, and she made it. There is a kind of direct and downright inquisi-



A SHOCK FOR THE LADIES

<i>Annie Parker</i>	MISS HELENA PICKARD
<i>Clara Soppitt</i>	MISS ETHEL COLERIDGE
<i>Mrs. Northrop</i>	MISS BEATRICE VARLEY
<i>Maria Helliwell</i>	MISS MURIEL GEORGE

tiveness about *Ruby* which makes all social intercourse with her immediately entertaining for onlookers. She has no reticences and no mercy.



PHILOSOPHIC INTERCHANGE

<i>Henry Ormonroyd</i>	MR. FRANK PETTINGELL
<i>Ruby Birtle</i>	MISS PATRICIA HAYES

It is an uncomfortable home at the best of times, and Mr. LLOYD PEARSON invested *Alderman Helliwell* with a habitual jollity and relative decency which, if not perfect, was at any rate something of a moral achievement for a man with such a home and such friends. Chief among those friends is *Councillor Albert Parker*, whom we know that Mr. PRIESTLEY must have met and suffered under in boyhood. Mr. RAYMOND HUNTLEY, although excellently made up to suggest this mean, limited but clear-sighted man, makes an excellent contrast to the rubicund *Helliwell*; and the trio of husbands is completed by Mr. ERNEST BUTCHER's *Herbert Soppitt*, the henpecked worm who turns at last. When husbands round on nagging wives the audience can be guaranteed to applaud, and applaud it did on this occasion; because *Clara Soppitt* (Miss ETHEL COLERIDGE) reminds us immediately of another Yorkshire lady, *Mrs. Squeers*, whose husband frankly recognised her special pre-eminent gift for exhibiting dislike. *Clara*

Soppitt dislikes most things, where *Annie Parker* (Miss HELENA PICKARD) has retained a more youthful expectancy and *Maria Helliwell* (Miss MURIEL GEORGE) lives more superficially in both pleasures and troubles.

It is this silver wedding party who make the play. There are, it is true, a quite conventional hero and heroine, but they are hardly seen or heard, and there is a rather tedious old photographer whose slow bibulosity is used, as drop-scenes are used, to break the action of the main plot. Mr. PRIESTLEY is on holiday in this piece, and he recklessly tosses away advantages that were open to him. There is a needless improbability about the part of the photographer in the final solution. But by then we are not disposed to be too critical.

In *Eden End* Mr. PRIESTLEY showed how well he could put drunken conversation on the stage with a peculiarly deft and happy touch. There is another of these pleasant interludes in *When We Are Married* between the photographer and the jovial heavyweight barmaid, *Miss Lottie Grady* (Miss MAI BACON). But the whole evening is a hilarious Yorkshire "do." D. W.

"AN ELEPHANT IN ARCADY" (KINGSWAY)

This pastoral light opera is about the Bloomsbury boys and girls of Pisa two hundred years ago, who would undoubtedly have crossed the piazza with their noses in the air had they encountered their illustrious fellow-citizen *Louisa*, heroine of Mr. DOUGLAS BYNG's moving revivalist catch, as they ambled out to the groves in fancy-dress to look for nuts and simplicity. I don't believe *Louisa* would have thought much of them, either.

Arcadia was to them as the U.S.S.R. is to W.C.1 to-day, the innocence and highmindedness of its rustic population being phenomena of which they were far more deeply convinced than I have ever been. Accordingly they turned their backs on Pisa and cultivated yokel colour.

It is as immediate a recommendation of the lyrics of this piece to say they are by Miss ELEANOR and Mr. HERBERT FARJEON as it is of the music to say it has been selected and adapted by Mr. ERNEST IRVING (who also conducts) from the works of such composers as MOZART, A. SCARLATTI, PAISIELLO and PERGOLESI; yet the evening is not as satisfactory as I had expected. It is difficult to say exactly in what it falls short, but I think it suffers from a monotony not only in the music and the general pitch of the lyrics, but even in Mr. HUGH STEVENSON's otherwise pleasant sets. There is very little fire about it, a lack of light and shade, and, though this seems a strange thing to say about any book to which the FARJEONS have put their hands, there is not very much humour, in spite of a theme which invites malicious comment. Another trouble is that the authors have been so sparing with dialogue that there is scarcely time to clear one's palate, so to speak, between one dainty and the next, and one cannot help the feeling that the piece is being held up too often without sufficient reason. And there is still another criticism, perhaps more serious in such an entertainment, and this is that by no means all the lyrics are fully audible. I was in the front row of the stalls, and therefore rather on top of

the orchestra, but even so it should be possible to hear every word in such good seats. It seemed to me that the fault lay with some of the singers and not with the orchestra.

Probably I hoped for too much. I



A GREAT DEAL IN ELEPHANTS

Bertoldo Mr. PERCY PARSONS
Count Pomposo Mr. FREDERICK RANALOW

should be unfair if I were to leave the impression that there is not a lot that is charming, both to ear and eye, and those who have been blessed with a better understanding of music will doubtless prove less captious. The story is simple. *Count Pomposo* (Mr.

FREDERICK RANALOW) is a spendthrift with such a kindly passion for his private zoo that he keeps a band to put new heart into his fishes as the sun goes down. (Have they tried this yet on the Test? I should like to see the Houghton Club standing to while the prudences is knocked out of their three-pounders with Stravinsky.) He has also a daughter, *Florinda* (Miss IRENE EISINGER), who has got herself caught up in the funny notions of the Arcadian Academy. A rich young gentleman named *Lelio* (Mr. ERIC STARLING) falls in love with her, but not being an Arcadian but a hearty fellow of the sort who would have rowed Five in his college boat, he makes no headway until he returns with a brown face as the mahout of an elephant which the Count has been rash enough to order. Fortunately he has plenty of money and is able to settle the Count's many pressing debts; and he wins his lady in the end by letting loose his elephant (the rumbling off was so heavy and realistic that for a moment I had fears for the Leaning Tower) at the end of an Arcadian mask and carrying a terrified

Florinda about for the rest of the night. The mask is based on the *Daphnis and Chloe* legend, and Mr. STEVENSON has put it on beautifully; his dresses here and throughout the piece are delightful.

For so exacting a part Miss EISINGER's voice is on the light side, but she has grace and accomplishment. Mr. RANALOW is excellent, but has little to do. Mr. STARLING plays the young gallant with dash and sings well, and Mr. GEOFFREY DUNN must be specially commended for his witty performance as the topbrow of the Academy. Miss LINDA GRAY's middlebrow, Mr. GEORGE HOWE's jealous author and Mr. PERCY PARSONS' circus magnate also shone brightly on the side of comedy. ERIC.

Christmas is Coming

"The season for digging up the nests of white ants to get at the larvae has just arrived."—*Newcastle Paper*.

"Subtract 38 from 14. The answer, which everybody will get right, is 26. But how did you work it out?"—*Cairo Paper*.

Sorry—we got it wrong.



BLOOMSBURY IS SHOCKED

Lelio Mr. ERIC STARLING
Florinda Miss IRENE EISINGER
Ortenso Mr. GEOFFREY DUNN

Foul Weather Frolics

It was misty. It was calm. It was very wet. We walked along the beach in our shiny oilskins trying to pretend we weren't miserable.

"What on earth do people do at the coast on days like this?" sighed Kate, who can endure no feeling in the world for more than five minutes."

"Fish," said I, catching sight of Mr. Clarke with a load of what looked like hundreds of fish. Cold bows were exchanged. Mr. Clarke lives in the too big house next door to our tiny seaside cottage.

"Did you ever fish, Kate—I mean before I knew you?"

"Never. Did you?"

"Once."

"Did you catch much?"

"Nothing. It wasn't a good day, or something. Sea-fishing is very easy."

"It looks easy," said Kate, looking back at Mr. Clarke.

"What that chap can do anyone can do," said I with an air of stating the obvious. "You buy a line with a sinker and two little hooks. You look about for bait—"

"Mussels," said Kate. "I heard a man in the post-office talking about going fishing. He was collecting mussels first."

"Well, then you stick the mussels on the hooks. You lower the line over

the side. When you feel a tug you give a jerk. That hooks the fish. Then you draw him in."

We bought a line. We searched the beach for mussels. No mussels were to be seen.

"Perhaps the tide's wrong," I said. "Or we might be at the wrong place," said Kate.

"Have you ever seen mussels about here?" we asked a polite small boy.

"Yes."

"Do you see any about now?"

"No."

"Why are there none now?"

"I don't know. Someone may have taken them."

"Do you know anywhere where we could get some now?"

"You might find some at that point," indicating a headland some miles to the north.

"Anywhere else?"

"You might find some at the boatyard," pointing to a boatyard some miles to the south.

We next tried a passing sailor in from a yacht.

"At the pier," he said. "They stick to it."

The first piles of the pier were on dry land, but they had only barnacles.

"Good job I have on my long rubber boots," said Kate. "I can wade out." Then in a moment—"It doesn't do you any harm getting wet with salt water, does it?"

"Is the water getting through the rubber boots?"

"It comes in at the zips. There are no mussels here, anyway."

We squelched on farther. Another polite small boy ran after us and hailed us. "Excuse me, are you looking for bait?" he asked, holding up a solid mass of mussels.

"Yes. Thank you very much. Where did you get them?"

"Sticking to the pier."

"Going fishing?" said the boatman, eyeing the mussels.

"Yes. Where's a good place?"

"See that mooring near the pier?" he said. "Tie your boat to that."

A technical difficulty suddenly occurred to me. "Is it best to let the line touch the bottom?"

"It depends on what you're after. If you want flounders you let it touch the bottom."

"And will you get the other things at any level?"

"You might."

"This is fine," I said as I rowed out. "How long do fish keep?"

"Oh, they're better eaten fresh. We'll have them for supper."

"But there may be far too much."

"We'll finish them for breakfast."

"But we can't eat a whole load of fish."

"We can give some away."

We moored and baited and Kate lowered.

"Let's try for flounders first," I said. "Let it rest on the bottom."

"How do you know when it reaches the bottom?"

"The line goes slack."

"We can't reach the bottom, then," said Kate, showing the empty frame and the line still taut.

"We'll have to content ourselves with other things, then."

"What other things?"

"Oh, cod, perhaps."

Silence. Peace. Heavy rain. I lit a cigarette. The rain made it very soft. My knees were damp. Water had run on to them from my oilskins as I rowed.

"Are you remembering to jerk when you feel a pull?"

"I haven't felt anything."

"This may be a bad place to-night," I said oracularly. "Fish change their habitat for the slenderest of reasons. A slight drop in temperature, say. Look about and see if you can see any gulls fishing. They are infallible guides."

There was a splash behind me.

"What was that?"

"A gull dived in," said Kate.

I twisted round. A gull emerged with an enormous fish in its beak. "Seem to be plenty about," I said.



"PLEASE DON'T GET THE IMPRESSION THAT WE'RE TRYING TO SELL YOU SOMETHING."

I had a sudden inner conviction that Kate was ignoring fishy interference with the bait. There was a hiss like escaping steam as a school of porpoises rose in the distance. Then splashes as frightened fish leapt in the air to escape the menace.

"Let me try."

"All right."

I hauled in. The bait was intact.

"Try on the surface," said Kate.

"Those last fish were near the surface."

"That's because they were frightened. They don't eat when they're frightened. They eat when they're at ease deep down in the water."

"Were you by any chance a fish in a previous incarnation?" asked Kate.

Silence. Peace. Rain. Another wet cigarette.

"Why couldn't we fish from the pier?" asked Kate. "We're just next it. We wouldn't have to pay for a boat."

"It probably isn't any good."

"We couldn't catch any less."

"That's just our luck. Only small boys fish from piers, anyway."

"There's a pretty big man at it just now."

I looked. It was Mr. Clarke's guest—a cousin or something. He was drawing in his line. There was a gleaming fish at the end of it. It looked like a whale.

More silence. The rain lashed. Kate shivered.

"Not cold, are you?"

"Just my hands and my feet."

She was purple and shivering.

"We'll stop for the night," I said briskly.

"Any luck?" asked the boatman.

"None."

"None?"

"None."

We met Mrs. Clarke. She is by way of being gracious. We were still carrying the bait from sheer apathy.

"Going fishing?" said Mrs. Clarke brightly.

"We've been."

"Any luck?"

"None."

"None at all?"

"None at all."

"Too bad."

"I wish I'd caught even one," I said.

"It's just luck," said Kate soothingly. "We'll try again to-morrow."

I knew at once that she was partly right. I would try again to-morrow. Kate was bored and wet and cold, so she wouldn't repeat the experiment. I too was bored and cold, but I was a male, a member of the obstinate sex. I would go to-morrow and other days. I would become a fisherman. I would buy rods, become knowledgeable about flies. Fishing had got me.



"WE CAN'T GO WRONG; THE ARROWS POINT THE WAY."

A van was at the door as we reached the cottage. "Any fresh fish to-day, Madam?" inquired the vanman.

Bias

"The correspondent reports rumours of the formation of a National Cabinet which will include Mr. Churchill and Mr. Eden.

It is fair to say that the other papers do not take such a gloomy view."—*The Times*.

Tall Oaks From Little Oak-cones Grow

"Conifers, such as the oak and elm, should be avoided."—*Trade Paper*.

Peace With Humour

"Two lovable comedians in a comedy you'll love.

An irresistible concoction of laughter, song and dance, including the Prime Minister's visit to Herr Hitler."

Cinema Advt. in "*Mombasa Times*."

"Herr Hitler beamed with delight as the men of his native soil swung past him.

He saluted continually, raising his arm more than 400 miles in an hour and a half the parade lasted."—*Bristol Paper*.

No wonder there was a shadow over Europe.

Politics

DARLING JOAN,—You know how it is in London, one never talks about anything but Shirley Temple and things, because everybody is so busy being political and important in their offices all day, the one thing they want to do after is relax. Well, now we are in the depths of Somerset and the whole place is seething with politics and everyone knows to a T exactly where Memel and Danzig are. Can you beat it?

Yesterday they took us to a cocktail party on the terrace, with a north-east wind but perfect cocktails, and Guy was seized on by somebody concealed as an Austrian peasant, despite the fact you have to be in your teens to get away with one of those drindls, and she will never see thirty-eight again. So when they'd exhausted the dahlias Guy said I see the Prime Minister has gone Fishing—not I agree a brilliant Conversational Opening but you'd think harmless. But no, a complete Blue rag: she fixed him with her beady eye and said, The country

understood when it returned the National Government that it was to take a stand against Force and Rally the world against the Aggressor, and since then it has done nothing but give way hand over fist to the dictatorships.

Well, Guy was completely sabotaged by this, having put the emphasis on Fish rather than on the P.M., and stood registering a good man wronged, and I by this time had gathered near, so I said, So true, but the thing is, can you rally anybody without any guns which we hadn't then because of the Labour Government, keen though I am on Mr. Maxton.

She drew a deep breath to reply, and I could see some unkind words about France forming themselves on Guy's lips, so to avoid any ugliness I said courteously, with my usual flair for pouring oil. As a matter of fact I am all for Stalin. I saw him on a news-reel the other day and he had the kindest face, exactly like my Uncle Ted who died last year and wouldn't hurt a fly bar Big Game, and they of course enjoy it as they have a sporting chance of eating you and they are all mad keen on Sport. These kindly

words seemed to silence her. What a wife for a diplomat I should be, and before she could begin again Maude, whose party it was, came up with the craze for Health and said for Heaven's Sake Rose don't sit on that stone.

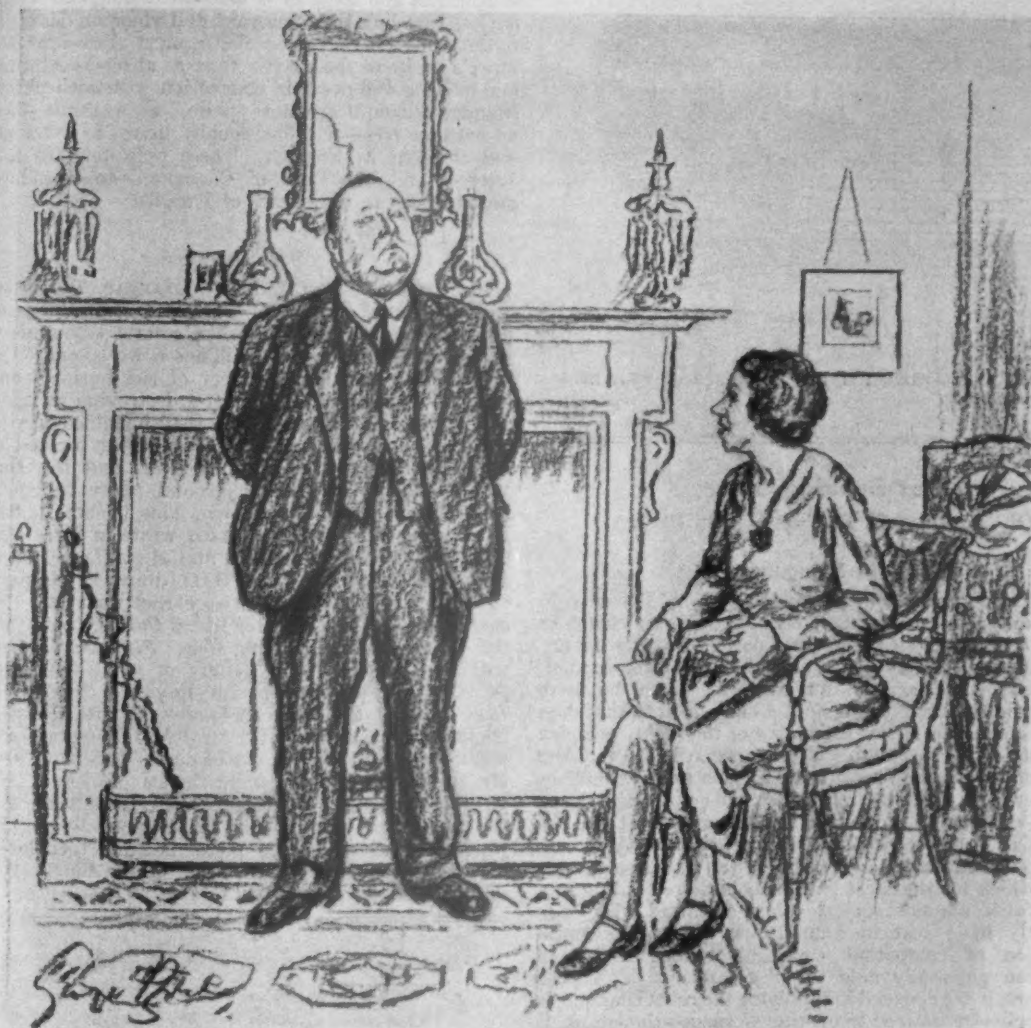
Yes but straws show the way the wind blows, though this peasant protagonist was more like a brick than a straw in figure weighing 12 stone as she must, and nobody now except the odd stockbroker here and there *raves* about the present govt. particularly. Do they in India? Because everyone under forty-five realises that tiresome as the French are they are more our dose of salts really, and cling to them we must. Because what I mean is they've had Napoleon and got it out of their system while Germany and Italy haven't yet. Such bad luck they should both be trying to have one at once, such a strain for them to have to keep on stealing thunder. And really those entrancing René Clair films make one feel France is the only civilised country in the world, whether they smack each other in Parliament or not. And anyway if you want to see some kindergarten drop in at Westminster any afternoon.

So that's my line and no one could think Mr. Eden more attractive than I do. I wept buckets when he resigned, almost as bad as the Abdication except that nothing could be, and anyway Mr. Eden will come back. But Quite Apart from his looks I think he was dead right, and do let's have a spot of youth or early middle age at the prow. There's him, and there's a wonderful person called Mr. Harold Nicolson without an h, you must have read some of his books, cretinous as you are about contemporary literature, because they are ideal. Anyway he apparently knows all about Abroad, having been there, which practically none of them have except to Baden-Baden. And then there's A. P. Herbert who couldn't be saner except for his Bee about betting, and I daresay even the younger Pitt had irregular views about something. And Cranborne, because the Cecils are Always Right, and Churchill to get Defence going, because tread on toes he may, but no one could call him inefficient.

Why don't they and some others club together and be another party and do something? I would assure their success at the poll by canvassing for them. I am no mean canvasser. I once canvassed the opposition candidate in a municipal election and won him clean over. Because it would be so lovely to have a government whose motto was not Non, all this non-intervention and non-aggression seems



"I CAN REMEMBER THE TIME WHEN BUSES AND CARS AND VANS AND LORRIES USED TO RUN UP AND DOWN THIS ROAD."



"IT'S TIME I WROTE TO THE B.B.C. AND TOLD THEM WHAT I THINK."
 "OH, HENRY, DO GIVE THIS NEW MAN A CHANCE TO SETTLE DOWN."

to be non-sense and to lead non-where.

But naturally nothing will happen, we shall soldier on to the next election and then everyone will vote labour in an exhausted way because anything for a change of faces in the paper, and I daresay that will be out of the frying-pan. How drab the party system is.

Because you know how it is in the Cabinet in England, you can drop thousands of bricks or go and live in Madeira indefinitely, but if you are kind to your mother-in-law or an invalid sister or have some com-

pletely intrinsic virtue of that kind they never can possibly bring themselves to turn you out of it, how praiseworthy, how decent, how fatal.

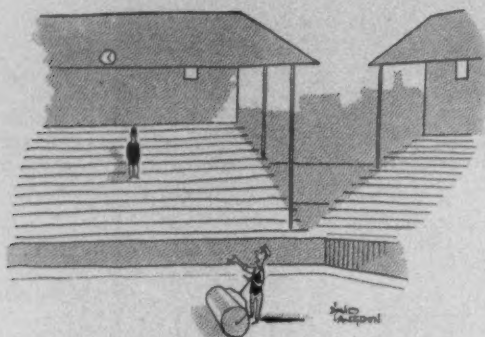
But what I think, though for goodness sake don't split on me even in India, is Why can't they all stop being so madly loyal to each other and the Party and not letting Geoffrey down because he's been such a good friend, and concentrate on being madly loyal to the country and not letting it down? I expect this idea isn't cricket and simply reeks of National Socialism, but I swear I'm not. Nobody could

believe in individual enterprise and private property more than I do: I won 12/6 at bridge last night and I intend to hang on to it come Mr. McGovern come Sir Oswald Moseley.

The strain of country life is too much for me. I ache to get back to London and forget politics and have a nice conversation with somebody about Bing Crosby.

"Good Food News!
 Special This Week.

1 Large Tin Brasso and 1 Large Tin Floor Polish, 1/-."—*Advt. in Scottish Paper.*
 Come, come, the war hasn't started yet.



"ALL RIGHT, THEN, I'LL BET YOU SIXPENCE THEY'RE PLAYING AWAY."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

Paladins in Manganese Steel

MOST modern weapons, declares STEPHEN POSSONY in *To-morrow's War* (HODGE, 8/6), are so transient in character that no two authorities are agreed as to what new devilry might be most profitably employed in a future conflict. Grain-destroying bacteria, for instance, might be more useful than flying submarines. The one certainty that does seem to emerge from this discussion of the highly complex economies of warfare and war preparation is the physical impossibility, declared specifically in such units as millions of tons of steel, of supplying the demands of a long fighting "front" of the kind familiar in the Great War with all the material even now considered essential. Curiously in contradiction to prevalent ideas, the writer rather suggests a war in which for the most part machines are fighting in a rather futile manner against other machines with comparatively little cost in human life, almost the entire population of combatant countries, except the small proportion physically able to pilot tanks or high-speed aeroplanes, being engaged in supplying the robot champions. This book—translated from the German—though it is founded on hard statistical fact, has a certain nightmare quality more remote than ever from martial pomp and circumstance. Defence gains on aggression, and the whole ugly war business becomes so preposterously cumbersome that in despair of ever making it move nations may be driven to resort to mere blockade or trade strangulation—or even to peace by agreement.

Dante for the English

Those who have already on the most frequented of their shelves Mr. LAURENCE BINYON's translation of DANTE'S *Inferno* will need no second bidding to add *Dante's Purgatorio* (MACMILLAN, 7/6) to its forerunner. Those who have not should be assured that this exquisite rendering in English triple rhyme provides undoubtedly the closest access to *The Divine Comedy* for a reader innocent of Italian. Familiar and captivating mannerisms link Mr. BINYON's rendering to the verse of the Elizabethans and the Pre-Raphaelites—of all English schools of poetry the couple with the strongest Italian affinities. The Latin stress

in such words as "aspect," the use of unaccented rhyming syllables at the close of a line, are among the technical devices that link these buoyant and vigorous decasyllables to those of SHAKESPEARE and ROSSETTI. Professor SAINTS-BURY's praise of the latter's verse as at once sculptural and glowing will occur in connection with such phrases as "tender colour of orient sapphire," an example—perhaps an extreme one—of a line equally literal as a translation and eloquent in English. There only remains for Mr. BINYON—like the Curé of Cucugnan—to introduce his grateful flock to the glories of Paradise.

Pre-Victorian

The scene of *This Other Eden* (HARRAP, 7/6) is laid in the agricultural district of Berkshire and Wiltshire; the time is round about 1830, when a farm labourer's wages were no more than seven shillings a week, and "Captain Swing" was starting his career of rick-burning, and the harassed peasantry were bent on destroying all threshing and reaping machines because they imagined the farmer would manage with their aid to do with less manual labour. Lord MELBOURNE is Prime Minister, and the Duke of WELLINGTON is in the background ready to crush any incipient revolt with armed force. This, in short, is the rural England of which GEORGE ELIOT wrote in *Felix Holt* and CHARLES KINGSLEY in *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*. And the characters which Mr. D. J. HALL draws in his pages are curiously like those of the two earlier novelists. *Winterbourne*, for example, and his friend *Oakley*, protagonists in this tragic fight for a living wage; *Sir John Benham*, his wife and daughter, that family of stout Conservatives; *Mr. Childe*, rector of the parish; *Raymond Hope*, nephew of *Lady Benham*, the Somerset landowner with ideas beyond his time, who is in love with *Sir John's* daughter—all these might well have stepped out of one of KINGSLEY's stories. Mr. HALL has certainly caught the atmosphere of the time, but it seems improbable to us that his latest book will have the success accorded to his *Perilous Sanctuary*. He has produced a clever period piece, but the troubles of the agricultural labourer in the time of the fourth WILLIAM do not touch us very nearly to-day.



"WHAT'S HE LIKE OVER THE STYX?"

Producers' Paradise

While *Moscow Rehearsals* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 12/6) will be chiefly of use and interest to serious students of the theatre, it does throw reflected light on current Russian life, the more significantly because it is not designed to that end. Mr. NORRIS HOUGHTON, a young American producer, went to Moscow for six months in 1935 on a Guggenheim Fellowship, to study Russian methods of training and production. He is an instructed and alert reporter, and, finding the Moscow men of the theatre only too willing to talk about their isms—from Ultra-Realism to Super-Symbolism, from Constructivism to Puerilism (under a grander name)—he is able to give us a vivid and, so far as the subject allows, a coherent picture of a crowd of régisseurs, designers, actors and playwrights working in a fine conflict of theory but with impressive methods of practice, on the repertory system, directly under the Commissariat of Education, unhampered by considerations of profit-making or, for that matter, of time: if a play is not satisfactory at the announced date the director rehearses it for another six months or so without being liquidated for it. Mr. HOUGHTON finds the fundamental flaw in the system to be that in fact no one is writing good plays. The fetters evidently do constrain. The great successes of recent years are the old despised "bourgeois" classics which a new nationalism, replacing a rigid internationalism, increasingly encourages.

Truth Behind Barbed Wire

Captain LIDDELL HART has often felt, when listening to Generals talking about one another, that the sum-total of their evidence made them all out to be fools, and that, similarly assessed, all admirals must be reckoned knaves as well as fools. Unfortunately for the reader, when senior officers compile their memoirs they are apt to use quite different language, taking cover behind an institutional loyalty—"a conspiracy for mutual inefficiency"—that only a ruthless scrutiny can strip away. In *Through the Fog of War* (FABER AND FABER, 12/6) the scrutiny is so merciless that one is bound to admit history is already playing havoc with reputations. After a series of studies of the personalities and principal episodes of the Great War, the best that the writer—himself dogmatizing like a field-marshal—can find to say for our military chiefs is that several of the second-order leaders showed ability, and that LAWRENCE of Arabia had a genius for war. Surprisingly, after much reflection, the



NOTES OF TRAVEL

Foreign Husband (whose Wife is going to remain longer). "GIF ME TWO DICKETS. VON FOR ME TO COME BACK, AND VON FOR MY WIFE NOT TO COME BACK!"

Phil May, October 23rd, 1897

politicians are found to be always ahead of the soldiers in soundness of strategic outlook. In this latest volume Captain LIDDELL HART is seriously concerned to impress

certain essential lessons, especially the peril of that kind of mental inflexibility which compels observed fact to fit into preconceived theory. Our French allies' obsession with the theory of unlimited attack is the grand example of this error, but our own persistence in optimistic forecast is not far behind. There are a few words in the epilogue that are of deep significance when applied to the recent crisis and threat of greater war.

Soho Slum

The builder of an old seventeenth-century house near Berwick Market had called it New Moon House: now it was New Moon Yard, a slum occupied by a strange collection—the Screech Owl night-club, the Lunar Wine Company, the Café Bar run by *Gregorio Pizetti* and his wife and daughter, a cabinet-maker and his family, and several other non-descripts, male and female, of anything but respectable habits. Not a very pleasant gathering. *Captain Ashton*, proprietor of the Screech Owl, was one of those tough nuts thrown up by the War prepared to run any risks for money; and when two sinister-looking Jews begin to hang about the Café Bar we note with some apprehension that one of them secures an interview with him. In fact they have come with the idea of "arranging" a fire if they can get good terms. *Ashton's* insurance money will clear him for a time at all events and give him something to play with, and he consents. The result is that four lives are lost, including that of the actual incendiary, whose partner has given him away to the police, the unfortunate *Pizetti* loses all the money he had saved in order to take his family home to sunny Italy, and we are left to imagine what happens to the proprietor of the night-club, whose steward and ex-batman has told him plainly what he thinks of his conduct. *Here Comes a Candle* (CASSELL, 7/6) is the name of the book, the author is STORM JAMESON, which is to say that the story is readable, the dialogue natural, the descriptions stark and occasionally coarse. But with one or two possible exceptions the characters are a curiously unpleasant lot.

Ships and Men

Under the general title of *Square-Rigger Days* (SEELEY SERVICE, 15/-) Mr. C. W. DOMVILLE FIFE has assembled nineteen true stories of life afloat during the last half-century of the age of sail. Strictly speaking, the sub-title "Autobiographies of Sail," does not in fact apply to all of them. The account of the *Veronica* mutiny, for example, which incidentally was one of the earliest cases to bring the late

Lord BIRKENHEAD—then of course still Mr. F. E. SMITH—prominently before the public, is obviously not told at first-hand, nor are the other narratives from the same pen. The greater part, however, such as those for which Mr. HARRY HINE, R.I., is responsible, are genuine personal experiences of the writers, some of them going as far back as the eighteenth and sixties and the East Indiamen with their painted ports which still linked their generation with the fighting merchantman of NELSON's day. Shipwreck, ice, fire and mutiny, with other excitements, have fallen to the lot of several of the narrators, and the book as a whole provides an interesting and enlightening survey not only of such exceptional occurrences but of the ordinary day's work of the "square-rig" seaman. The illustrations of seaports, ships at sea and scenes on board are varied in subject and well reproduced, though a little more care might have been given to their titles. In one case, for example, "Calloa" for "Callao" is twice repeated, and a schooner is described as "four-masted," though five masts are plainly visible.

Old Friends

Quinney's for Quality (WARD, LOCK, 7/6) will be appreciated more fully if it is sipped and not hastily swallowed. For Mr. HORACE ANNESLEY VACHELL's attitude towards Joe and his grand-daughter, Jodie, is becoming so benevolent that to meet them as it were in bulk is to risk unnecessarily a sense of surfeit. But although it is as well to give this warning it can truly be said that the *Quinneys* have still retained all of their business shrewdness and at the same time have lost scarcely any of their kindness and charm. Take for a typical instance such episodes in their lives as *The Junior Partner* and

A Mandarin. And in the end Jodie by giving birth to a son sees to it that the *Quinney* stock is not in any danger of disappearing.

Skilled Labour

Mr. H. C. BAILEY, in his latest volume of stories, *This is Mr. Fortune* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), gives his well-known detective some problems of the greatest difficulty to solve. *Reginald Fortune*, however, is always at his best when he is up against somebody or something really and truly tough, and at any rate in "The Key of the Door," which is the last tale of this half-dozen, he achieved a triumph which almost reduced his critical friend, the Chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, to silence. That, both in matter and manner, is the neatest yarn of the collection, but *Fortune*-hunters can hie them to the remaining five without serious fear of disappointment.



"DO SHUT THE DOOR—THERE GO THE CENTRAL EUROPEANS."

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Charivaria

It was stated in court that a reveller had returned four times to a night-club after being asked to leave. It is thought that the doorkeeper must have put too much spin on him.

★ ★ ★

"CHINKS IN OUR A.R.P. ARMOUR."
Sunday Paper Contents Bill.

Britons first, we say.

★ ★ ★

A North London woman is still using the same packet of needles that she bought in 1901. She attributes her success to a lifelong avoidance of haystacks.

★ ★ ★

The police have discovered a chest full of counterfeit coins dated 1939. Somebody seems to have been forging ahead.

★ ★ ★

It is claimed by a gossip that he once went for nine years without smoking. But that's nothing. We once went fourteen.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent says that every time he has attempted to listen-in to the Grand National his set has developed atmospherics. He hopes that next

time he will be able to cut the crackle and come to the horses.

★ ★ ★

"At the end of the journey the face should be cleansed with cream and then wiped away with eau-de-Cologne."

Beauty Hints in Local Paper.

But remember to draw in another before you go down to dinner.

★ ★ ★

"On what grounds do so many people object to the one-back theory in football?" queries a sports writer. Football grounds of course.



According to a professional there is a lot of money to be made touring around giving swimming exhibitions. Show this to your goldfish.

★ ★ ★

"BISHOP OF LICHFIELD ON HIS PILGRIMAGE
'SOAKED' BUT HAPPY."

Church Paper.

Why "but"?

★ ★ ★

Winter greens, we are warned, should not be eaten until they have been given the necessary flavour by the early frosts. Slugs don't seem to care.

★ ★ ★

"No man in these days can afford to take a narrow view of what goes on in the outside world," runs an editorial. What about railway booking-clerks?

★ ★ ★

Rugby referees still complain of difficulty in getting the ball into the scrum. Many scrum-halves are asking for a new ball after the two-hundredth throw.

★ ★ ★

"Beards grow more slowly in the winter than they do in the summer," says a barber. Another way of telling the time of the year is to keep a calendar.



★ ★ ★

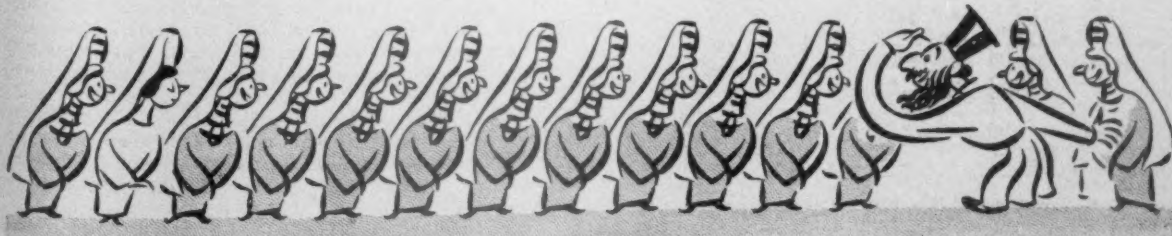
Tact

"U.S.A. NEXT

"There are roughly 450 to 500 Rotary centres in Britain. We are confident of gaining their co-operation in a short time, and when this is done we shall approach America and other English-speaking colonies on similar lines."—*London Daily.*

★ ★ ★

"To tell your wife that she is one in a thousand is no compliment," observes a magistrate. SOLOMON found that out.



Lucy's Just Rights

DEAR GEORGE,—Lucy has got her just rights. It happened like this. The other evening she said William I have been thinking. Thoughts seem over rife in your brain I said, but proceed. Re women she said, should men make allowances? For or to? I said. To she said, in cash. I said some fellows praiseworthy keep aged Mothers also others have to splash the bobs about because exflames say fork out or, which serves them right for doing them wrong.

No she said, this newspaper says wives should have wages. Har har I said, icy. Please William she said, pipe down do, virtue may be its own reward but theres nothing like a handout for housework, this paper says wives must claim their just rights because more than fifty percent of married people are women if you count men who try bigamy. I said Lucy if you want to keep a pure mind never believe what you see in the papers except the date and even that you must check up on as maybe it is yesterdays paper, anyway my budget being balanced on a knife edge this argument must now taper off.

But its the principle of the thing she said, its time women came into their own. Into mens own you mean I said. Mothers sisters friend gets pocket money she said. Thousands of fellows go broke trying to live up to someone elses income I said, I do not intend to make it thousands and one. Ask the boss for a rise she said, then you can give it me as my just rights. The chances are fifty million to one speak-



"I SUPPOSE THERE'S A COMPANION TO THAT—' BEFORE RUHNS."

ing from memory I said. Well she said, why not have him round for a do and ask him when he gets convivial, is he wed? No I said, he is a mateless plumber living at 7A Laburnum Road with use of k and b and a lady comes in and does for him daily. Give him an invite Lucy said, and I will manœuvre.

So the next day I said ooh Sir a word allow me. What word? he said, some words arent fit to give away. Would you partake of a meal with us in our home and the near future? I said. I will come Wednesday he said, thats the evening Miss Pring my housekeeper has off and I never relish same as though she is no beauty spot she cooks fit to make your mouth tidal.

That evening I told Lucy and said Lucy you must cook as never before viz well as his housekeeper is a cordongbloo. I wont make a god of his inside she said, but Ill treat it as a very old pal.

Well on the Wed I took the boss home and he said what ho Mrs. Twiss is the meal ready? And waiting Lucy said and served soup. After four plates he said that soup was very okay, may I help self to beer? bung ho to both. Then Lucy brought in fish with a little bit of lemon on to suck at halftime and he said why this is incredulous, my favourite fish, how wonderful to have a wife who cooks top-hole and looks ditto. Why havent you got wed? Lucy said. Alas he said, my life was blighted by a tough tiff I had with a female in days of yore since when Ive given girls the old cold shoulder though seeing you two so connubial makes me realise what I miss. I suppose you say marriage is a lottery Lucy said. No he said, as I know several fellows whove done quite well out of lotteries, here is mud in your eye.

Well George everything Lucy brought in was just what he liked and what with that and the second crate of beer he got very mellow and I thought now is the time to ask re rise. But suddenly who comes in but a very ah la looking lady with a face like a quick flip through a film paper and a dress which made her very encouraging. The boss was so took aback he stopped drinking, almost. Do my eyes deceive me? he said, or is it Miss Pring?

It is I she said very grammatic. Why he said, you look a different woman, congratulations. Received with thanks she said. Come he said, a noggin of beer for the lady. Arch she said, I may call you Arch may I not? this is good bye. What does this betoken? he said. My heart is heavy as beginners cake she said, as I have fallen for you very hard but you have shown no interest, not even one per cent, so I have redecorated myself and am going to try to forget.

Forget what? he said. That Ive nothing to forget she said, when a girl gets to my age and has done nothing she ought to regret it is very tough indeed so I am now catching a bus to London where I hope to run amok in a quiet way, ajoo. This is a nice old how do you do he said. They say the way to a mans heart is via victuals she said, but every time Ive hoped Dan Cupid would plug your heart full of darts like as what mine is youve only said another helping please which has soured me somewhat.

Honoria I will be frank with you he said, for the best part of some time I have admired your cooking but scenically you have left me cold, in fact I have often said in jest if winter comes can Pring be far behind, but seeing you looking like a you too can lure him advert I succumb, will you be mine? Wont I just she said.

They sat there drinking good healths etc etc until they said would Lucy and me mind not swaying about and when they went Honoria said careful precious dont step on those puce mice and he said do you mean the ones chasing those little elves?

When they had gone I said Lucy I thought the idea was



AT HOME
THE SINGER

to put him in a good mood and then ask for a rise, why introduce Honoria? Well she said, I wanted to give him his favourite food so I called to see this housekeeper to enquire re tastes and she told me she was gone on him but couldnt somehow hook him so I said although your face wouldnt launch a thousand ships like the late Helena Troy I could make you fetching enough to push him into loves torrential stream so if you come round and cook his ideal meal for me in return Ill put some good spadework in on the old face and shape so you can do the farewell for ever act which always gets men.

Yes yes I said, but what about this rise I was to get to give you your just rights? Oh you men Lucy said, always thinking of money money money.

Well George next afternoon the boss said William my nuptials are impending, I felt like calling it all off this morning as Honoria drank my health so much last night that on waking I felt I had no health left whatever but your wife called this morning and what she said decided me. Kindly unfold I said. She pointed out he said, that if I wed this Honoria I shant have to pay her anything as I

now do for housekeeping so on Lucys suggestion I am giving you a percentage of my saving as a rise.

When I got home I said fie Lucy, who talked about just rights? Well she said, youve got your rise, Ive got my wages and the boss is heading for economical harness with Honoria who has got what she wants and if that doesnt make everything just right I dont know what does.

Well George it takes all sorts to make a world but some sorts make it harder than others dont they? I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Say what you like George this is the best 1938 weve ever had.

Sensation

"HOBOKEN, N.J.—The municipal garbage contract yesterday was awarded to James J. McFeely, Inc. The award was made by Mayor Bernard N. McFeely and accepted by President Joseph B. McFeely of McFeely, Inc. A cheque for \$25,000 was tendered by McFeely to McFeely, countersigned by Mary McFeely, a sister of Mayor McFeely."—*Canadian Paper*.

Agreed

I MET a man while walking to the station
Who told me things and forced me to reply.
"We all but lost," he said, "our civilisation."
"If we had one," said I.

He said, "We have no quarrel with the Germans,"
And I replied, "Well, no one ever has.
They merely cloud the air with curious sermons,
While we like films and jazz."

He told me that the Czechs had no defences;
The Maginot Line was nothing more than tin.
I said, "The Russian Staff had lost their senses;
They were half-soused with gin."

He said, "The gentlemen who whine and mutter
Might very well have plunged the world in war."
"I know," I said. "Our guns were made of butter.
Why don't we get some more?"

And both of us made one stout resolution
To go on forging guns and never cease
Till we had tightened up our Constitution
And plunged the world in Peace. EVOE.

It's an Ill Wind.

THIS is the story of a hat which blew off the head of a man called Clutterbuck as he drove an open two-seater car of an old type with only three forward gears and a reverse which had for many years declined to operate unless the driver held the lever in place with one hand and the choke out with the other, and even then more often not than otherwise, along a secondary or B road between Devizes and Marlborough at a quarter to three on a fine September afternoon with the idea of attending a wedding at the latter place at half-past two precisely.

The hat, which had a fine gloss and a certain spirit of independence, flew at great speed over a quickthorn hedge into a field, where, after the manner of top-hats all the world over, it rolled rapidly along on its brim until brought to rest by an obstruction, in this case the body of an obscure farmer yclept Rogers who had been overcome by ennui on his way to look at some heifers and incontinently prostrated himself on the grass.

"Whatdyawant?" said the farmer.

The top-hat, however, wanted nothing, and the farmer, perceiving that it was neither man nor beast that had so rudely disturbed his slumbers but a hat of a kind not often seen in Wiltshire save upon the head of the inimitable Fred Astaire at sundry Scalas, Regals, and Astorias, began to scan his immediate surroundings for some explanation of the phenomenon, and finding none came to the erroneous conclusion that it must have fallen from heaven, as to the manners and modes of apparel of which place he had woefully old-fashioned ideas. With this belief in mind and in the no less certain conviction that the apparition of the hat was a sure sign of the especial favour and protection of the gods, he clapped the article upon his head, and, so strong, as psychologists and others tell us, is the power of suggestion, immediately felt a New Man. "So long as this admirable hat is upon my head," he said to himself, "I fear nobody; nothing is impossible to me," and the good

man, commending his neglected heifers to the Devil, set off at a round pace with the intention of telling his wife exactly where she got off.

Meanwhile the man called Clutterbuck held resolutely on his way. "For," he reasoned, "there appear to be no gates in this formidable hedge and it would be the act of a madman to endeavour to surmount quickthorn in these trousers. Moreover I am already above a quarter of a mile from the scene of the accident, and the turning of the car in this secondary or B road presents problems which I am in no mood to face." The possibility of reversing was, owing to the peculiarities of his machine, no sooner thought of than dismissed, for it would not be practicable in his present costume to steer with his feet, as was his habit when in more sober garb. Accordingly there was nothing for it but to haste to the wedding, or rather, since the hour was now close upon three, to the reception, there to make such conversational capital out of the loss of a good hat as a man of moderate imagination may.

This is not, however, the story of the man called Clutterbuck but the story of his hat.

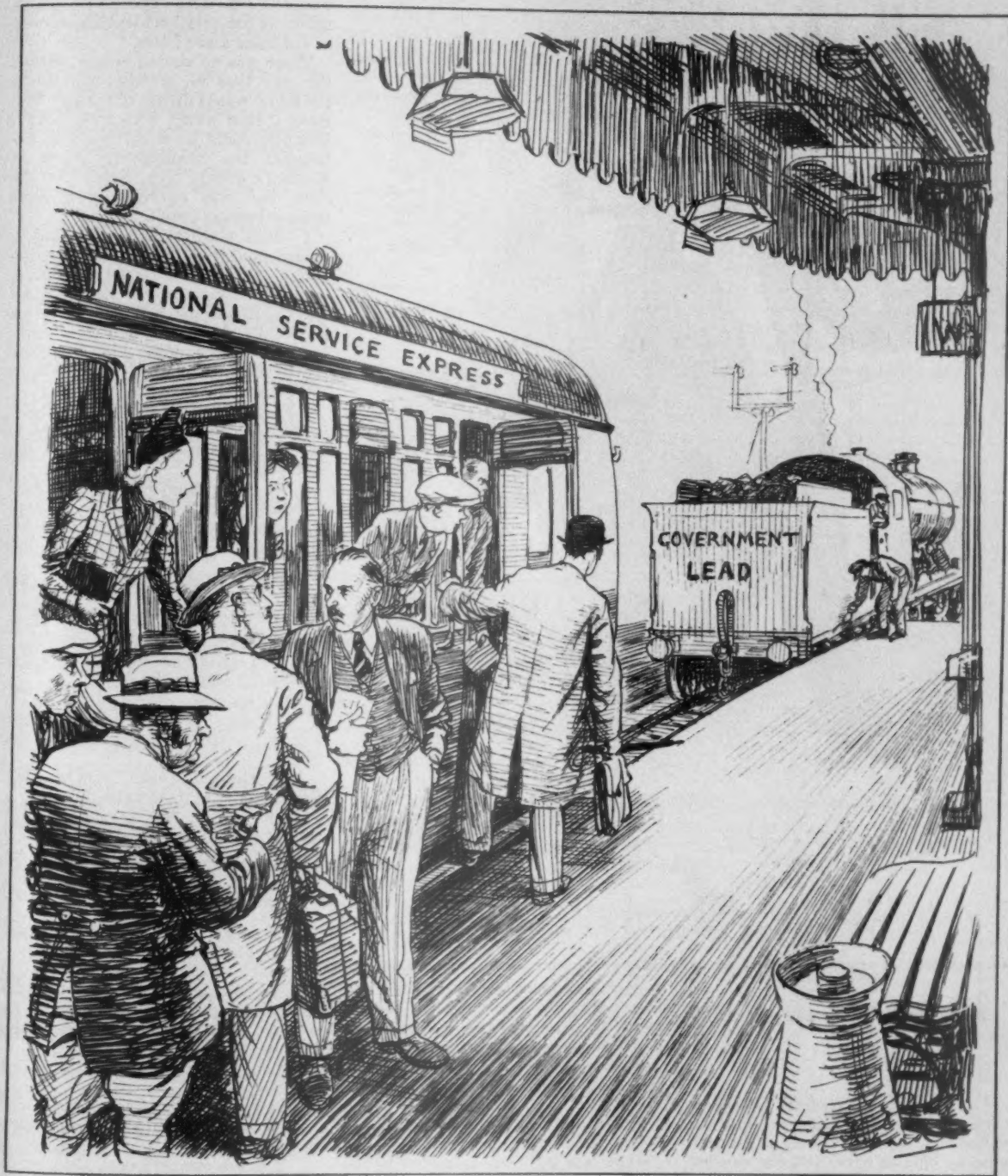
The farmer, having concluded his interview with his wife with the observation that if he had any more of her nonsense he would put a ring through her nose and sell her in the open market, was thereby put in mind of a certain neighbour who had recently sold him a bull without troubling to disclose that the animal was suffering from a particularly painful affliction of the legs. This neighbour, being large in stature and of a choleric disposition, had long grown accustomed to a servile attitude even from those to whom he traded scorbutic sheep and pigs in the grip of swine-fever, and it was with no foreboding of evil that he watched the rapid approach of the farmer in his unfamiliar top-hat. Indeed he was actually considering the advisability of selling the man a spavined horse he had lately acquired when the farmer hailed him at a distance by the names of rogue, villain, rascal, thief, scoundrel, knave, swindler and lying cheat. "Infamous fellow!" cried the farmer, coming close, "the diseases which rack your worthless stock are not more loathsome and detestable than those which prey upon your debased and evil mind."

The effect of these bitter words upon a man unaccustomed to abuse and inclined through years of self-indulgence to apoplexy was shocking in the extreme. His countenance grew purple, his mouth opened and shut three times and without word or cry he fell in a fit in the midden and never stirred again.

The farmer, well pleased with this further extraordinary proof of the favour of heaven, strode swiftly homewards, revolving in his mind what further steps remained to be taken before he could feel justified in sitting down to his tea. It is a signal proof of the cool-headedness and moderation of this excellent man that he decided there was nothing else that need be done. "I have cowed my wife and killed my enemy," he reflected, "and I see now no obstacle to a life of continued peace and contentment. I will wear this hat to the funeral of my misguided neighbour and afterwards dispose of it in Devizes to the highest bidder. For when a thing is of no further use to him a wise man sells it for what it will fetch." To this praiseworthy decision he firmly adhered, thus unquestionably escaping that sure vengeance of the gods which, so the Greeks tell us, lies in wait for those who are led by good fortune into a condition of overweening insolence.

The man called Clutterbuck caught a cold in the head, so the moral of this story lies presumably in the title.

H. F. E.



WAITING FOR THE ENGINE



"IS THIS PRE-WAR WHISKY?"
"NO, BUT IT DARN SOON WILL BE."

Grandmother's Holidays

Pirates

"STICK 'em up!"

I awoke with a start from a pleasant little nap on the garden-seat. The sun still shone, the blue waters of the loch were as blue as ever, and the wooded hills as peaceful. Had I been dreaming?

"Stick 'em up!"

Surely I knew that raucous voice! The stern words too had a familiar ring. Yesterday they were hurled at me by

a most awe-inspiring "gangster," the day before by a picturesque cowboy "tough." And only this morning they had been hissed in my ear by a really very uncivilised American traffic-cop. But always the voice was the voice of Michael.

In my grandmotherly wisdom I knew better than to disobey that voice. I "stuck 'em up" and trembled in the most approved manner, knowing what was expected of me.

"Ah, pirates this time," I murmured after a quick glance round—"quite unmistakably pirates."

There seemed to be four of them, making up quite a respectable horde. They surrounded me, flourishing deadly weapons, which my experienced grandmotherly imagination identified at once as cutlasses and pistols.

There was no way of escape, except the way that no grandmother worth the name would dream of taking. The mean "Run away, I'm busy" way. But who could have the heart to extinguish the bloodthirsty gleam in Michael's eyes? Eye, rather, for the right one was covered by a most sinister-looking patch.

I could not let down that patch, ornamented with inky skull and crossbones, or that fierce corked moustache, or that spotted red handkerchief knotted in true pirate fashion round his head. All the pirates had their heads in spotted red handkerchiefs and their right eyes in patches. It seemed to be the proper buccaneering uniform.

"Please, Sir," I said in trembling tones, addressing him whom I took to be captain of the band, "may I ask who you are?"

"I'm Long John Silver," he hissed through set teeth (Michael is an adept at hissing through set teeth), "and we are going to take you away to our cave."

"Where is your cave?" I asked anxiously.

The Very Smallest Pirate, whose patch had slipped down on to her nose, pointed a dainty but unrelenting finger up the hill behind the farm.

"It's up there," she said.

"Oh, dear," I cried, "is it far up? For it's a *very* hot day for climbing hills."

"It's a *very* nice cave," said the Very Smallest Pirate ingratiatingly.

"I'm sure it is," I said, "and I should like to see it very much if it were not for the hill. And, please, what do they call *you*, Mr. Pirate?"

"I'm Cut-throat Bill," she answered sweetly.

"Of course," said I, "I might have known that."

"And I'm Red-handed Joe," put in the Next Size in Pirates, whose piratical head-dress took on rather a jaunty air on top of her soft brown curls; "and Rita is Bloodthirsty Jack."

"And very good names too," said I admiringly.

But Captain Long John waxed impatient with this gentle unpiratical chit-chat.

"You are our prisoner!" he roared. (His pirate voice reminded me of the Inchkeith foghorn.) "Come at once to our cave or I'll stab you with my cutlass," and he made passes at me with a walking-stick.

I raised beseeching hands.

"Oh, please, *dear* pirates, don't be so cruel to a poor old lady. I really couldn't climb that hill to-day."

"Ha, ha!" laughed Long John scornfully, "we'll drag you there with chains."

"No we won't," said Rita, the biggest of the pirates, *alias* Bloodthirsty Jack, very decidedly.

I thanked Heaven for one kind heart.

"At least," she added, "not if you really don't want to come. But I thought you might like to see the Bones."

"Bones?" said I, duly impressed. "What sort of bones?"

"Human Bones!" bellowed Long John with ferocity.

"Human Bones," repeated little Cut-throat Bill with most disarming relish.

"But I don't want to see the Bones," I protested, "not if I have to climb that hill."

"I've got one here to show you," said Bloodthirsty Jack, and I shuddered as she thrust a cast-off ram's horn under my nose.

"Very nice bones," I remarked rather faintly. "But as I don't want to be made into Bones myself, and as I've been prisoner for quite ten minutes, do you think you might let me go now?"

"I'm afraid," said Bloodthirsty Jack very politely, "we can't let you go till you have paid a ransom."

"How big a ransom?" I asked doubtfully.

"A thousand pounds," came the foghorn voice at me, while its owner pointed my own ruler straight at my head. I wrung my hands in despair.

"Oh, please, pirates, couldn't you do with less? I haven't got a thousand pounds handy."

"Wouldn't Granddaddy pay it to get you back?" piped up Red-handed Joe, evidently wishing to be helpful.

"No," I said decidedly, "I'm quite sure he would not."

It seemed an impasse.

"Show a little mercy," I begged; "I am very old and very poor."

Long John was one who knew not the name of mercy, but the heart of Bloodthirsty Jack melted.

"Could you manage about five pounds, do you think?" she asked kindly. "Or even five shillings?"

"Now I call that kind," I said. "The difficulty is that I haven't any money about me at present; and I should not like to keep you waiting while I went and fetched it. *But*," I continued in winning tones, "I know where there are some excellent chocolates. How would a chocolate all round meet the

case? It's only a suggestion," I added hastily, for I saw Long John frown and bite his corked moustache, "but they are the very special chocolates which I got in Oban yesterday."

I saw the unpatched eyes of the pirates exchange glances, and the expression in those eyes I thought seemed favourable.

"All right," said Long John, as one who accepted a compromise, "that'll do. Where are they?"

"You'll find them in a box on the sideboard," I said brightly. "But you must swear, as honest pirates, to take only one each."

"Right-o," said the pirates.

"If I get one with a nut, may I spit it out and take another?" asked the Very Smallest Pirate.

"That," I said, "would be quite fair."

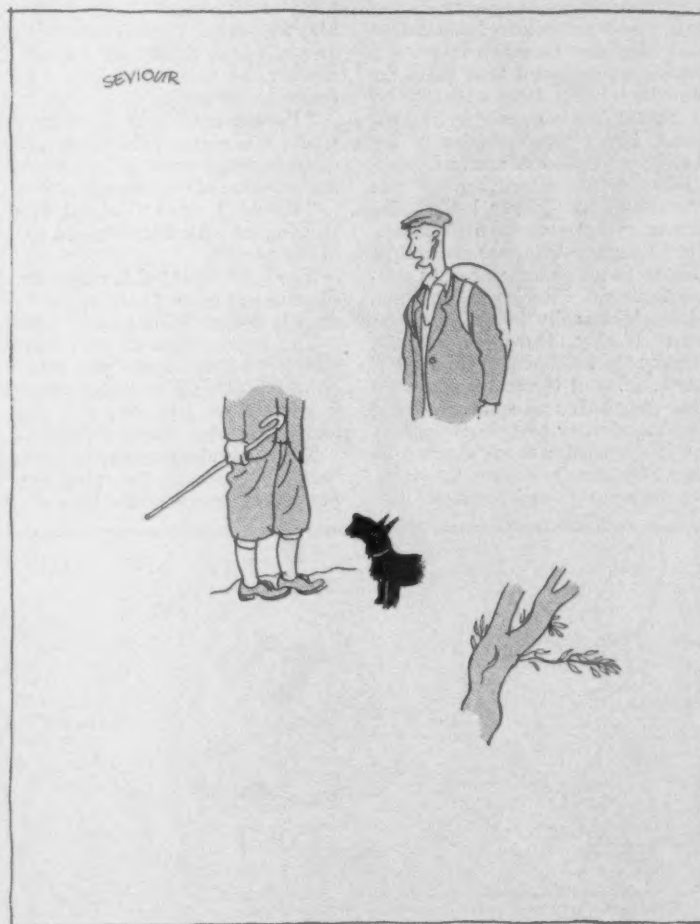
The pirates formed four and made a bee-line for the house. As he went, Long John Silver burst into fierce song—

*"Oh, we're tough, mighty tough in the West,
With lots of curly hair upon our chest;
We haven't any manners
And we pull our teeth with spanners.
Oh, we're tough, mighty tough in the West!"*

I settled comfortably into my corner again. The tumult and the shouting died away.

"It's an adventurous thing to be a grandmother these days," thought I, "but how jolly!"

The blue loch and the peaceful hills seemed undisturbed. Duty done, grandmotherly prestige upheld, I slept again, this time in peace.



"I'VE HEARD QUERER TALES ABOUT THESE SCOTCH MISTS!"

Analytical Chemists of the World, Unite!

Not long ago a man came up to me outside the County Fire Office in Piccadilly Circus and asked me if I would explain to him the principle of Walschaert's valve gear. Not unnaturally I told him that I knew nothing about the principles of any valve gear at all, and suggested that he had better go and ask Walschaert. The man was dumbfounded. "You must excuse me," he said, "but really you look exactly like a rising young locomotive engineer."

Thinking over this episode afterwards I concluded that the man was probably after my wallet and was making a more than usually subtle opening; but I wonder now if perhaps he was not completely genuine. Accustomed as I am to seeing faces as mere agglomerations of eyes, noses and mouths, it had not occurred to me that actually they can be much more.

I am now persuaded that there are people who can pin down a man to his exact station in life merely by looking at him. For this conclusion I am indebted to a London musical critic, who, in an article lamenting the fact that musicians no longer looked like musicians, recently wrote as follows:

"Dr. Vaughan-Williams resembles nothing so much as a prosperous gentleman-farmer. Rachmaninoff and Sibelius might easily be mistaken for eminent Harley Street specialists, Stravinsky looks like an analytical chemist . . . and Gustav Holst, with his thin grey hair and spectacles, was the typical country schoolmaster."

Now it is one thing to say that a man does not look like a musician, for everyone knows what a musician looks like.

He has long hair. (So has a bull-fighter for that matter, but there is a certain subtle difference in his bearing.) But it is another thing altogether to label a man as looking like an eminent Harley Street specialist. Sibelius, for instance, is short and thick-set, with a round head, almost completely bald; while Rachmaninoff is tall, with a long head covered on top with close-cropped grey hair. You might think that it was not easy for two men so different both to look like eminent Harley Street specialists; but then you are not a musical critic. In point of fact the following two anecdotes add colour to the Harley Street theory:—

One day when Sibelius was walking along High Street, Helsingfors, working out a difficult passage in his seventh symphony, he perceived a young woman approaching him with the hesitant gait of one of Sherlock Holmes's clients preparing to ring the bell at No. 221B, Baker Street. "I bet you fifty marks," said Sibelius to his companion, "she wants my autograph," and, taking off his hat and bowing, he asked the lady what he could do for her.

"Pardon me," said the lady, "but would you recommend the application of mercurochrome as a placebo in severe cases of epidermo-phytosis?"

"Would I what?" asked Sibelius, pausing with his fountain-pen half out of his pocket.

The lady repeated her inquiry, and Sibelius put his pen back again. "Who exactly do you think I am?" he asked.

The lady smiled at him ingratiatingly. "I don't know just *who*," she admitted, "but I could tell as soon as I set eyes on you that you were an eminent Harley Street specialist."

The other story concerns Rachmaninoff. Mounting the platform one Sunday afternoon at the Queen's Hall,

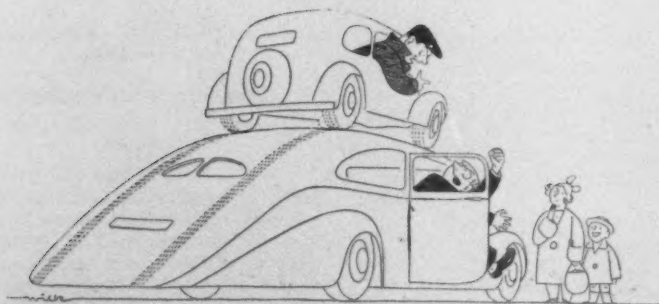
where he was to play a programme of Bach, he found the auditorium full of sufferers from nervous complaints, who crowded round him and refused to listen to his explanation that he was only a pianist. "Rubbish!" they said, "you're Rachmaninoff, the eminent Harley Street specialist. Why, one's only got to look at you!"

A serious disturbance was only avoided by Rachmaninoff's prompt action in prescribing sod. chlor. and aq. all round, which made everyone happy. "Знай сверхчѣкъ свой местѣкъ!" said the great musician to me afterwards, smiling delightedly at his recollection of the affair.

These stories certainly do something to confirm the critic's opinion. They ought to. I made them up for that very purpose. I have another one on the tip of my tongue about the time when Stravinsky was called to give expert evidence in a case of murder by poisoning, but only the very sceptical will want to hear that. (It is a good story all the same.) D. Vaughan Williams, who is called to testify that Stravinsky is no more an analytical chemist than the Judge, is accused of being merely a prosperous gentleman-farmer, obviously without expert knowledge on the subject; and the two of them are only saved by the intervention of Sir Henry Wood, who, once you are assured that he is neither a professional cricketer nor the captain of the *Queen Mary*, could not be anything but a musician. He not only has long hair but a beard.

The deduction to be made from all this, if that is the mood you are in, is that, although musicians no longer look the part, analytical chemists still look like analytical chemists, eminent Harley Street specialists like eminent Harley Street specialists, country schoolmasters like country schoolmasters (complete with thin grey spectacles—see above), and so on. The point that does not emerge is what a musical critic ought to look like. I know one critic who is constantly being taken for a left-handed Scandinavian lion-tamer, and another who is frequently approached by strangers under the impression that he is the Four Marx Brothers. I asked a young composer to give me his idea of the critical norm, with the intention of finding out how many of our critics approximated to it.

Unluckily he was suffering from a spell of adverse criticism. According to him, most of our leading critics could easily be mistaken for an eminent Regent's Park orang-utan. But then composers lack that acute judgment in viewing their fellows which critics so sedulously cultivate.



"MAYBE YOU'LL SIGNAL NEXT TIME YOU PULL UP!"



THE ANTI-NOISE LEAGUE



"ANYWAY, THAT'S HOW YOUR WIFE SAID IT."

In! Out!

PROMINENT among recent deep sighs have been a number of mine, but I did not heave mine out of relief at the postponement of war. Mine were hove in groups of twenty, ten through each nostril: they were deliberate, not involuntary; they were not symptoms but part of a treatment. Let me explain. (In fact, just you try to stop me.)

The fact is that just as we all thought we were steering quite clear of the Mysteries of Yoga by being wary in our dealings with Major Yeats-Brown, the Mysteries of Yoga took us in the flank by leaping suddenly out of a work called *Sleeping Through Space*, by Dr. Alexander Cannon. I have not had the privilege of reading this work or even of giving it so much as a reverential glance, but I have been reading extracts from it in a review, and here I am once more inflated by the belief that you can do anything if you know the right way to breathe.

One—I hope not the only—right kind of breath is the Kumbaka, outlined above. You close the right nostril, take a deep breath through the left, and then close that too. You then hold your breath until it becomes a strain to do so any longer, or until your eyes protrude, or something; upon which you slowly let it out. Then you close the left nostril and take a deep breath through the right. Each of these breaths is a Kumbaka, and the idea is to stage (if I may so express it) twenty Kumbakas at a time, four times daily: at sunrise, midday, sundown and midnight.

This will rejuvenate you, according to Dr. Cannon. In fact rejuvenation is only one (and how many did you think it was?) of the gratifying effects that you should soon begin to notice. Among the others is the fact that "your voice, although becoming altogether softer in tone, will carry to exceptional distances."

(Of course this rather assumes that you want your soft voice to carry to exceptional distances. My own feeling is that what you save on your telephone account you may to put it mildly, lose in an action for slander.)

My own poor attempts at the Kumbaka Way to Rejuvenation have not hitherto been very successful. I find that as an over-civilised city-dweller I usually fail to notice sunrise,

sundown, midnight or noon, and that even if anyone else were concerned to notice them for me I should usually at these times be engaged in sleeping, eating, drinking, talking, looking for last Friday's paper, trying to get rid of a cold, falling downstairs, climbing upstairs, or some similarly exclusive occupation.

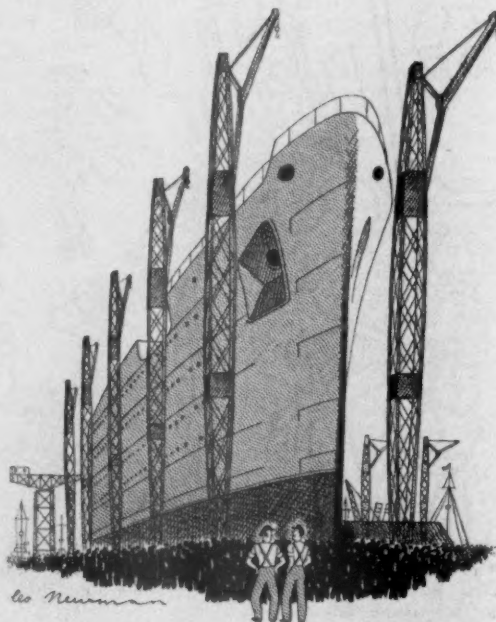
There are awkward points about the process itself, let alone remembering the proper times to go through it. About the crucial matter of closing the nostrils, for example, I am uncertain. I daresay the right way to close them is by muscular effort, but I have not yet succeeded in so closing one at a time, and I can't even practise the effort in public because everybody, including me, jumps to the conclusion that I'm going to sneeze. (Generally I am going to sneeze and I do sneeze.)

Even supposing that one is allowed to close a nostril by means of a small cork, or the ball of a thumb, or some other object one happens to have lying about, one's difficulties are not over. Mine aren't, anyway. I find I lose count of my Kumbakas.

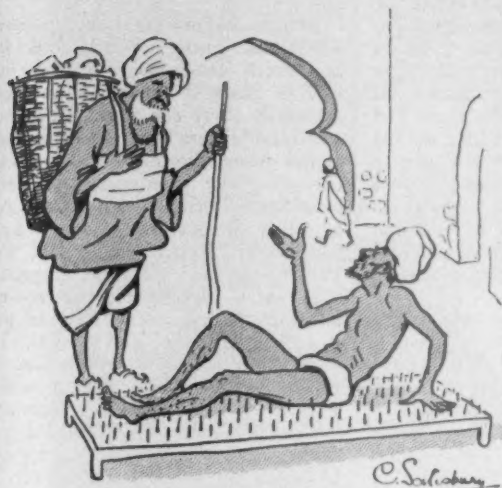
(There was once a captain in the South Seas with a mixed crew on board a boat carrying a cargo of cigars and those special tools, if there are any, used to make notches in the pivots of scissors, who lost count of his Kanakas. We are not on this subject, but we are not so far off it as we are off most.)

Even—to resume—even when I am all by myself with no distractions about at all I lose count of my Kumbakas, and how I should fare in circumstances that might justifiably be called distracting—such as usually afflict me at sunrise, sunset, midnight and noon—I hesitate to imagine.

Well, then, let's leave Kumbakas for a minute—we can always Kumbaka, as the wittier among us are already observing—and turn to Thibetan Segmental Breathing. None of that nostril trouble here, or at least Dr. Cannon is



"WELL, BERT, IT WAS FUN BUILDING HER."



"OF COURSE AT TIMES I FEEL MY POSITION RATHER KEENLY."

not quoted as mentioning it. Just the good old in-and-out that we all learned in our youth and have got no better at since. The catch in this department concerns the question of segments.

Each of us, you may not be any more aware than I was, consists of five segments. The first is from toes to knees; the second from knees to groin; the third (Going *erp!* restaurant floor) from groin to solar plexus; the fourth from solar plexus to larynx; the fifth from larynx to two inches above the top of the head. It may come as a surprise to you that there is any part of yourself two inches above the top of your head, and frankly it comes as a surprise to me that some people I could mention possess anything noticeable even below that dubious eminence.

The idea seems to be to imagine yourself breathing with each segment in turn. You lie and inhale deeply, and as you inhale you think of a spot of light or warmth travelling from the bottom of the segment to the top. You then exhale and think of the spot travelling down again. You keep this up for about three minutes with each segment, unless you've got something better to do, and you get no sympathy from me if you haven't.

What Dr. Cannon says is that you then become filled with a real magnetic life-giving force. What I say, first closing one nostril by means of a finger laid down the starboard side of my nose, is that the whole business seems to me too much like work, and I don't want any segment of it. My voice carries to an exceptional distance.

R. M.

Car's End

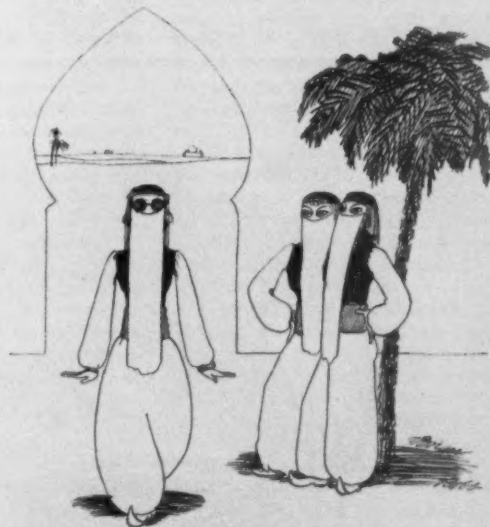
"So pass, beloved, to thy final bourn!
Thy friends deplore thee and thy neighbours mourn;
And they whose restless care and constant skill
Fed all thy wants and nursed thy every ill,
Who long were used to con with tenderest pride
The inmost secrets of thy dear inside—

The garage-hands with beaten breast bemoan
Their patient rapt, their chiefest income flown.
Ah! what avails the more than equine power,
The miles per gallon or the miles per hour?
What boot the splendours of the aery pump,
The burning axle or the vaunted sump?
The paths of glory lead but to the dump.

"Yet somewhere, far beyond the Stygian swell,
A mead there is all paved with asphodel,
Where rest those chariots whose illustrious worth
Stands proven, and their fame was bright on earth.
No snare lies hid in that innoxious grass,
No mordant splinter nor perfidious glass,
But plenteous flow, unsought by conscious toil,
Unfailing petrol and perennial oil.
Here shalt thou also, gentle friend, have part,
Here shalt thou come—yet not as now thou art.
But as when kings stood fearful to admire
Thy tiger's roar and dragon's breath of fire,
As when that impious lorry dared to meet
Thy slighted strength, but soon confessed defeat,
And two great Rollses from the highway's edge
Declined the strife and sought the safer hedge.
Thee shall acclaim with hospitable song
The curricles of all the tuneful throng:
Of Austin, laureate of a queenly age,
Of Morris fierce, and Cowley, reverend sage;
Nor shalt thou miss, resounding from afar,
The trump of 'Dryden's less presumptuous car.'
Yet pity me, absented from all mirth,
Alone henceforward doomed to walk the earth;
For this I know, that in the world of men
I shall not look upon thy like again."
Thus mourned the bard and pouched his one-pound-ten.

Embarrassing Moment

"Alas! When his faithful canine friends came on stage and saw him in the stalls they greeted him with a chorus of joyous whelps."
Daily Sketch.



"LOOK AT FATIMA TRYING TO MAKE HERSELF MYSTERIOUS!"

Letters from a Gunner

VI.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—Let us not talk of the Crisis, its causes and effects. We have had enough of that. Let me tell you what happened to me—there are 180,000 like me now, and it must have been very similar for most.

Monday afternoon was very like ten little nigger boys. There happen to be ten anti-aircraft gunners (or rather eight gunners, one bombardier and one glorious second-lieutenant) in the office, all in different batteries, and the telephone started to call them up from three o'clock onwards. Biggs, the bombardier, was first to go. He is large and red-faced and hearty and talks a lot. For once he went away silent. Simon, the second-lieutenant, went next. He came away from the telephone looking rather white, called his secretary in and dictated notes (including, she confided afterwards, his will) for half-an-hour, then walked out without saying a word. So we all disappeared, some relieving their feelings with unexpected oaths, others with a last cup of tea at Lyons, one with a hearty embrace for our blushing juniorest typist. So it started.

The parade-ground presented a grim spectacle: "Ordered confusion," as you might say, was how my companion described it, "and, as Mr. George B. Shaw might put it, 'confusion prevailin' over order.'" He was right. The calmest people of all were the three stolid bus-drivers, ready after their day's shift to drive us down into darkest Kent.

Have you ever slept on bags of

cement? Of course not. But there are worse things. During the week I had one night in a cement factory, or mill, or mine, whatever it is, one in the tap-room of a local pub (and not for reasons of alcohol), one on the cold ground under the battery lorry (the lorry itself seemed to be full of sergeants and other superior beings; I am determined to be a sergeant), two under canvas and one in a manger. It wasn't a nice manger. The seven plagues of Egypt had nothing on it, except perhaps for the loss of the first-born, an omission which to me at four on that particular morning brought merely academic relief.

But the week had one excitement, our two-day excursion to— (But I will mention no names. Who knows what Nazi spy may wish to notify General Goering where I am likely to be found in the next war?) When the sergeant-major told us that a Lewis gun section was to be mounted in the Amusement Park the whole battery stepped forward as volunteers. I was not one of that lucky party. I heard that they pushed a car to the top of the scenic railway and nearly all passed out because they had never realised that they would need a brakesman. I was on a hill outside the town. Just below us was a greyhound racing-track, and alongside a mental hospital with a small but charmingly kept private cemetery in its grounds only a hundred yards away. Our sergeant, who has escaped a sense of humour, made us dig our ammunition pit alongside the fence adjoining the cemetery.

My two days there were purely days of self-preservation. "Remember, boys," said the sergeant, "the pilot can see you as well as you see him, and

what is one Lewis gun to a fighter plane?" (What, indeed?) "So you had better do a bit of digging." We did.

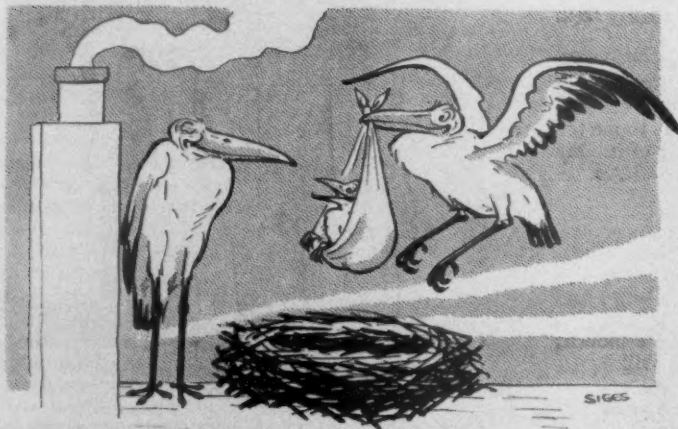
By now, believe me, I am practically a first-class navy. You have no idea how much knack there is in it, even with a pleasant medium like chalk. Naturally there are anxious moments when the blisters hurt, unpleasant moments when the rain finally soaked through your greatcoat and boots, hilarious (if primitive) moments such as when the sergeant stepped backwards into the pit we had dug. ("Pure 1913 Keystone," said my companion, who is a deputy-assistant-reserve-film-camera-man, very fond of such words as "montage" and the like.) But digging for your own protection is a wonderful stimulus. "A bit cold in winter," I said to the sergeant after we had finished. "Colder still in your grave," he replied gloomily. Perhaps he has a sense of humour of a sort. The kind that would regard slipping a skull into your bed as a really smashing effort.

After we had finished the pit I collected all the loose soil to cover up the rather glaring whiteness of the up-turned chalk. It seemed safer to me, but the battery commander on one of his visits was most sarcastic. "All you need now is five bobs' worth of bulbs," he said. I thought that very pessimistic. I did not expect to be there to see them come up.

But we were only two days on our hill, during which time of course we saw no sign of any actual Lewis gun. We were then moved to an even more desolate spot in the marshes, a place without distinction, without guns, without instruments, with only my manger (to the inhabitants of which I am now, so to speak, blood brother) and, what was worse, having a most inferior subsoil. Gravel is definitely much worse than chalk.

However, the war was nearly over. Tension was lifting. What if we had no guns, no blankets, no instruments, no cooking utensils? Mr. Chamberlain had mobilised the Fleet and flown to Munich.

Finally it ended. I have vivid recollections of unloading ammunition from a fish lorry in the pouring rain in England's green and pleasant land, of getting into my first bath for a week, a beautiful Corporation slipper bath, price fourpence; of Bombardier Fothergill, who in civil life is a floor-manager in a Corner House, eating sausage-and-mash with his fingers with an incredible air of elegance; of Boy Killey coming into the cement factory soaking wet after two hours'





"JUST WRITE A COURTEOUS LETTER SAYING WE'LL RAISE HELL IF OUR REQUEST IS NOT COMPLIED WITH."

guard over ammunition in a thunderstorm and saying "Blimey, I wish the war would start. It can't be worse than looking at that blasted ammo. with the lightnin' making a perishin' 'alo round me tin hat."

That's war, that was.

Your loving son,

HAROLD.

The International Situation

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—When I look around and see on every hand the feeling of apprehension that is continually smouldering like some noxious cloud, I cannot help but conclude that we are face to face with the crossroads. The pit yawns before our eyes and the precipice falls sheer on either hand. But I think that you, Mr. Editor, would be the first to say that we must go on. Were we now to stand still we should be taking the falsest step of all.

Are we to sit back and watch this country become the battledore of the world, flung to and fro across the chasm of international discord? That way danger lies, the danger that it may,

and very probably will, fall between two stools only to be crushed beneath the iron heel of military power on the one hand and the waters of economic destruction on the other.

Too long have red herrings been dangled before us in the attempt to lull us into quiescence. It is up to us to show by precept and example that they have completely missed fire. I feel that the journals of public opinion are largely to blame. Some of them say far too little, others far too much. The reverse ought to be the case, and as it is not, it should be our duty to put a stop to any possible misrepresentations before they materialise.

The people of this great Commonwealth of Nations must realise once and for all that they hold their own destiny firmly in their grasp, and unless they stand united upon it jealous hands will tear it asunder and distribute it to the four corners of the globe. Where should we be then?

Each political ideology seeks to spread a panacea over our understandings and in its shadow to do nothing more nor less than introduce the thin end of a white elephant. And that would be yet another millstone tied round our necks. The whole

situation is preposterous and almost too paradoxical to hold water.

If these deductions are wrong I can advance others equally conclusive. The depression was weathered by a wholesale tightening of belts, but the only possible way of making it permanent is for the nations of the world to seize the bull boldly by the forelock instead of half-heartedly putting an occasional pinch of salt on its tail.

We are trying to make the lion of war march hand in glove with the dove of peace, a proceeding which must inevitably open the sluices of disaster. Civilisation must topple and mankind find itself thrown out of the frying-pan into the seething waters.

Let us look before we take the plunge. Except we ponder well our aims and cement our desire for peace with the leavening of justice we shall find ourselves compelled to make our difficult way along paths strewn with the bodies of countless dead, our own included.

Believe me, Mr. Editor, an hour's determination can do more good in five minutes than a year of *laissez faire* can achieve in six months.

Yours faithfully,

BLIND HORSE.



"... AND IF THERE'S ANYTHING I'VE SAID THAT I'M SORRY FOR, I'M JOLLY GLAD I SAID IT."

The Lights of Clyde

O LIGHTS of Clyde, how bravely
You led us laggards home,
Your lighthouse windows winking
Above the plashing foam—
The last yacht of the season
To make for Holy Loch,
By Corsewall Point and Pladda,
By Cumbrae and the Cloch.

It thrust me back in fetters,
That first October storm;
I put away my sweaters,
Put out my uniform.
It's blowing now and hailing
Enough to make you sob—
My mind is full of sailing,
Though soldiering's my job.

But, in a yard at Chiswick,
Not far from Camberley,
I've found the proper physio
To mind me of the sea;

Full lucky were the cravings
That led me to the place,
For there, among the shavings,
My vessel grows apace.

So now, my faithful shiners,
Beloved lights of Clyde!
Steer home the tramps and liners
Safe through the wind and tide.
The winter sun shines briefly;
When all too soon it dips,
Be kind to all, but chiefly
Be kind to little ships.

And every time you see one,
And while you flash and swing,
Think kindly of the wee one
I'm bringing in the Spring,
That you may steer her bravely
By every isle and loch,
By Corsewall Point and Pladda,
By Cumbrae and the Cloch.



EASTWARD HO! OR THE BLAZED TRAIL

Herr Hitler. "Looks as if somebody else had been this way before me."



"DEAR MADAM, IN ANSWER TO YOURS OF THE FIFTEENTH PROX. . ."

Dog Does Not Eat Dog

You know how it is on Hampstead Heath on a dark evening. Disappointingly unrestful. You go out for a breath of air before dinner, looking forward to a life-giving little interlude with Nature, and within a minute you are either apologising through a haze of concussion to a copper-beech or else turning yourself into a foghorn on which your dog can regain his bearings.

Mine had been behaving with a truer sense of navigation than usual when without any warning a lunatic hubbub broke out at my feet. Sometimes when you are coming to after an anæsthetic all the evidence points overwhelmingly to the conclusion that the balloon in which you left the operating-theatre has bumped into one of those parties at the Nero's where lions and Christians, bracketed, came first on the agenda. It was like that.

"Our dogs, I think?" came a powerful female voice out of the murk.

"I presume so," I shouted across the din. "Would you be good enough to call your animal off?"

"I have," she roared, "but from what I can hear of him he is lost to reason. Perhaps you would plead with yours?"

I did more than that. I chose my words for their barbs and flung them at the piece of heath which had come so tremendously alive beside me. I reminded my dog that for one who planned to be the first of his kind elected to the Athenæum he was cutting a very poor figure. But it was a waste of breath. From the hysterical stream of insults which was pouring from him, on a higher key but of no less positive a character than those of his foe, it was clear that he was moved far beyond the normal. I had never heard him like this before. He was even touching on matters about which I had long assumed him to be ignorant.

"You haven't any red pepper about you?" I bellowed.

"None," she yelled back.

"Nor black?"

"No. You are not by any chance smoking a cigar?"

"No. A glass of cold water would have done, too."

"So they say."

"You haven't a match?"

"No."

This conversation, if you could call it that, was getting us nowhere, and hostilities were continuing with undiminished ferocity. The night overflowed with the yelping and snarling of a death-struggle which could have been laughed off without difficulty in

the heart of Africa, but not on Hampstead Heath. The only light on the arena was a thin gleam which came from a lamp-post in the far distance. It was enough, and no more, to show that while my dog was white, hers was brown. This made a rough division, but very rough, for they were revolving at about the speed of a two-shilling Catherine-wheel.

As if moved by a single prompting of heroism, we both dipped into the melting-pot at the same moment and drew out part of a dog. It became evident, more from the feel than anything else, that my dog had hers firmly by its off hind-leg and that hers had mine in an exactly similar grip. Considering what a mouthful of leg they each had the full-blooded commentary they were keeping up did them the utmost credit.

We both began to pull. Never having been involved before in a set-to of this class I imagined that all that was now required was a short tug-of-war between owners for the disputants to fall into their two usual halves; but I had never been further from the truth. Both sets of jaws were absolutely locked in the full-on position.

"Success along these lines will leave us each with a three-legged dog," I roared.

"How about trying the opposite



"WELL, I SHALL NEVER SEE US SO NEAR WAR AGAIN."
 "OH, VICAR, DON'T SAY THAT."

principle?" she screamed back—"like a telescope?"

At this point another shape loomed up and addressed us in a throaty voice rich with knowledge of the world.

"Pushing and pulling's no go," it said. "You could carry on with it all night and they'd still be 'anging on like steel vices. What we've got to do is to 'alf-throttle one of 'em by twisting 'is collar."

That "we've" was very welcome. Extraordinarily welcome.

"Mind which I tackle?"

"That one," I said quickly. So did the brown dog's owner, but I got it in first, and a large hand descended on the brown dog's collar and began work.

"For the love of 'eaven 'old on tight," cried the voice, "I'm too young to get bit."

"Rest assured, my dog never bites," the brown dog's owner declared.

"It looks like 'e don't!"

Yet another shape appeared beside us. This time the voice, still male, was thin and prim.

"It's an infernal disgrace!" it shouted. "Savage brutes like those ought never to be let loose on the Heath. 'Pon my word, the place is becoming a regular zoo!"

"Don't take it to 'eart, Guv. We all 'as a slice of original sin tucked away somewhere."

"I shall recommend the Council to have the creatures shot."

My dog still sounded like a blast-furnace, but already there were signs that the brown dog's wind was dropping to a mere breeze.

"You are sure you won't damage him?" asked his owner.

"No fear, Mum. I knows 'ow to do it. I've separated dawgs all over both 'emispheres. When I was a mess-waiter at G.H.Q. in India and the A.D.C.'s bull-terrier took 'old of 'er ladyship's peke it was me 'oo got 'em apart by slopping 'is nibs' curry in their dials, what the chef 'otted up special for 'im every day. That was 'ow I got my knight'ood. 'Ark at me!"

The brown dog, for whom I was feeling very sorry, gave a final gasp of protest and let go. There was a sound of footsteps running towards us.

"Here," cried another voice, "I've got a torch."

"Too late, mate. The war's over."

In a way it was and in a way it wasn't. The torch was a bright one. For the first time we saw the dogs for what they were.

"But that isn't mine!" cried the lady.

"Nor mine!" I said.

"Corlume! I'll tell you 'oose it is—it's mine! But what about the white one? 'Ere, it's not yours, Guv, I suppose?"

"With the greatest regret, I have to admit it is," the prim voice faltered.

The torch, swinging round, now revealed a strange sight a few paces away at the side of the path. Two small dogs sat, side by side, as if in the best ring-seats. One was white, the other brown. And both were yawning politely.

ERIC.

A Reverse

From Colonel Horatio Hogg

DEAR CONKLESHILL,—I was chatting about the Literary Society and your general mismanagement of it to a few friends the other evening, and we were agreed that unless you pull your socks up this year we shall have to oust you from your job as Hon. Secretary in favour of somebody with real organising ability, if I can find the time.

Johnson-Clitheroe pointed out that there is always a huge crowd at the Opening Social in October, but that as the season advances the members drop off one by one, until at the Closing Social in April there is a mere sprinkling. This I think proves beyond any doubt that you are not delivering the goods.

Yours sincerely,
H. Hogg.

From the Reverend Percy Cassock

DEAR CONKLESHILL,—I realise that in running our local Literary Society you have no easy task, but I think you ought to know that there is a good deal of dissatisfaction abroad. We were discussing it the other evening, and somebody (I think it was Colonel Hogg) pointed out that the numbers at the Closing Social are very much smaller than the numbers at the Opening Social. It does seem to me that if you ran a really bright programme in a really bright way the reverse would be the case. I suggest that this year you try to have more people at the Closing Social than attend the Opening Social. This will shut the mouths of your critics.

Yours sincerely,
P. CASSOCK.

From P. Johnson-Clitheroe, Esq.

DEAR CONKLESHILL,—I was rather struck by a remark of the Vicar's the other evening when we were discussing the Literary Society. He pointed out that the numbers at the Opening Social always exceed the numbers at the Closing Social, and that the painful conclusion must be drawn that you are not the man for the job.

I should be sorry to vote against you at the next election of officers, because I know you have done your best, and if you can run things well enough this year to get more people at the Closing Social than at the Opening Social I shall feel that you have wiped out the past and vote for you with pleasure. If, however, there is the usual drift as the season advances I am afraid I shall



"OI! SKIPPER, COME UP AN' GET ME ANOTHER STAR TO STEER WITH. WE'VE PASSED THE ONE YOU GIVE ME JUST NOW."

no longer be able to give you my support.

Yours sincerely,
P. JOHNSON-CLITHEROE.

From Lionel Conkleshill, Esq. (3 copies)

DEAR SIR,—I thank you for your letter, but I attribute the falling off in attendances not to my own inefficiency

but to the apathy of the members. In order to meet your wishes about the relative numbers at the Opening and Closing Socials, however, I have decided to start the season with the Closing Social and finish up in March with the Opening Social.

Yours sincerely,
L. CONKLESHILL,
Hon. Sec., L.W.L.S.

At the Play

"THE WHITE GUARD" (PHOENIX)

THIS play, certainly one of the four most worth seeing in London at the moment, describes what happened to a family circle of "White" Russians in Kiev, the capital of the Ukraine, at the end of 1918. When it opens, a puppet government put up by the German army is still in power; this crumbles under pressure from a large bandit force with which an efficient cut-throat named *Pellura* captures the town; and, two months later, the final curtain falls to the sound of the Bolsheviks marching in.

Apart from its other merits and the excellence of this production, the play is interesting for two reasons. It is a work of art written not merely without political bias but with deliberate moderation in a totalitarian state. We all know what Ministers of Propaganda do to writers who declare that their job is the presentation and not the perversion of truth; yet here is a play by a Russian Communist which shows members of the old régime as decent and even idealistic people. In the second place it has been a tremendous success, in spite of this honesty, in the Russian theatre. Under the title of *The Days of the Turbins* it ran for three hundred and twenty-five performances in 1926; the Moscow censor then had an attack of cold feet about it, as well he might, which lasted until 1932, since when its popularity has been unbounded. I wonder what would happen if a picture of a Jewish family, as fairly presented, were to be put on in Rome or Berlin?

Mr. RODNEY ACKLAND has adapted the piece from the original of BULGAKOV, and his dialogue is a distinct improvement on the language through which many of the Russian classics have come to us. To my mind the *Turbins* and their friends are also an improvement on the characters which so often littered the older Russian stage. I know there is a surprising kind of cumulative magic about a knot of languid mistresses and unemployed lieutenants moaning over an urn for three hours about the incomprehensible difficulty of taking the train to Moscow,

if the moaning be handled by a producer of genius with a first-class cast; it is seldom as dull as it should be. But the *Turbins* have the immense advantage of being grown up. They are people of courage, facing their



THE END OF A REGIMENT

Viktor Myschajevsky. Mr. GEORGE DEVINE
Alexei Turbin. . . . Mr. MICHAEL REDGRAVE

plight with a resilient adult humour tempered in the fire of suffering. They are intelligent folk, still loving the peace of which they have almost



YOUTH PROPOSES

Yeliena Talberg. . . . Miss PEGGY ASHCROFT
Lariosik. . . . Mr. STEPHEN HAGGARD

given up hope, talking as the Czechs might have been talking at this moment—or any others caught in a geographical trap which has been sprung. (They drink a great deal of vodka, it is true, which is more galvanic stuff than tea; but even cold sober they are more alive than most of the old stage Russians.) Except for one exciting scene where the army's G.H.Q. is captured by the bandits (which might in lesser hands have become irksomely melodramatic) the story is a picture of a small group living under constant strain and yet preserving their sanity in the domestic round. For the most part it is quietly told. There are wide gaps, as for instance the fact that we are never told how the *Turbins* have come through two months of *Pellura's* rule, but they are made to seem unimportant.

Mr. MICHEL SAINT-DENIS's production is admirable. It suggests so much more than is said, and in doing this builds up an atmosphere which is peculiarly distinctive and consistent. It combines all the issues into a whole which appears exactly right. The décor of Miss MARGARET JENNINGS is perfectly in keeping with it.

There is only one woman in the play, the sister who is the centre of the group, and Miss PEGGY ASHCROFT takes the part with an understanding which does not falter; her *Yeliena* is one of those gentle women whom no ordeal can destroy. As the elder brother who commands the local troops and is killed by the bandits Mr. MICHAEL REDGRAVE gives a very fine performance, particularly in the Second Act; Mr. GEORGE DEVINE makes a memorable character of a lovable hard-drinking veteran; Mr. MARIUS GORING's smart staff officer and Mr. STEPHEN HAGGARD's naïve cousin from the country let in the winds of comedy, very nicely judged, from opposite ends; and Mr. GLEN BYAM SHAW, as a stern man-of-war, and Mr. BASIL C. LANGTON, as the charming younger *Turbin*, fill out the picture. With Mr. GEORGE HAYES' *Vladimir*, contemptible husband to *Yeliena*, I quarrel; he strikes a note of farce which seems to me out of tune. Whether that is the fault of the author or the actor is a point which I cannot decide.

ERIC.

"THE MAN OF DESTINY"

AND

"SQUARING THE CIRCLE" (MERCURY)

The adjective "Russian" in front of a play or a novel has an immediate suggestion of depth rather than of jolliness. But *Squaring the Circle*, which has been a success these last ten years at the Moscow Art Theatre, would not claim to be deep and is extremely jolly. It is the proof, says the Mercury programme, that the Soviet régime has learned to laugh on occasion at itself, and even if it took a Five Year Plan or two to achieve such a measure of self-criticism, the plan has been a great success.

It is a play about student life, about *Vassya* (Mr. HOLLAND BENNETT) and *Abram* (Mr. DONALD ECCLES), who share a single room in a municipal lodging-house in Moscow. They have one bed and one hard seat, hardly anything else and hardly anything to eat, but many stiff books on social institutions to read. To this life each brings a wife, thinking his good friend will not mind a small thing like that in the room. Unfortunately they choose the same day to get married, and the wives do not appreciate each other. There is *Ludmilla* (Miss PAMELA GIBSON), over whose young and pretty head the revolution has passed without making very much impression. She is a home-maker, knowing and caring nothing for books and ideologies, wanting to make love, and making the pace rather too much for *Vassya*; and, by contrast, there is *Tonya* (Miss KATHARINE KINEAR), who is sublimely indifferent to where she is or what she wears or whether she or her husband has anything to eat so long as she can finish the very fat and serious books which have to be back at the library by the day after to-morrow. *Abram* cannot live up to her expectations any more than *Vassya* can to *Ludmilla's*. Indeed the disillusion on both sides of the chalk line with which the room is divided is so very immediate that we are not given much help in understanding how either knot came to be tied.

The spectacted *Tonya*, very well although sometimes too emphatically played by Miss KINEAR, has most of the best things to say because she sees life entirely through her books and the party teaching. Her own actions and everyone else's are fitted firmly into their appropriate classifications. So many pleas-

ant things are firmly ruled out as "feudal" or "bourgeois," and others as "unethical." She insists very sternly on ethical conduct, and when it is plain that a different arrangement of the

quartet would greatly increase the sum of human happiness she is the leading spirit in opposing the step because of the general effect on the party and society if people who get registered as married one day want it undone on the next. Here is Moscow reproving Reno.

Underneath the humour, which is brisk and unflagging, the play carries with it a searching criticism. These young students, without occupation or possessions, are living a life of the barrack, in which marriage has no place. It is too early for them to think of founding homes or families, and they do not need to settle down. *Ludmilla*, with the pretty ways with which Miss PAMELA GIBSON invests her, is a pathetic figure, contriving to make the bricks of a home from such very inadequate straw.

But the play is in the tradition of Victorian amateur theatricals. It is an ideal little play for amateurs to act, not merely in the comings and goings of the characters but in the slick happiness of the conclusion. It is an extremely enjoyable hour, but an hour that could not be stretched to two, and so to make what we expect of a theatrical evening it has to be produced with something else. Mr. ASHLEY DUKES has put it in double harness with *The Man of Destiny*, which precedes it. Each part of his programme is a good choice on its merits, but the palate is not prepared for the good simple fun of *Squaring the Circle* by having a rather more sophisticated dish first, and the evening might gain with the order reversed.

The Man of Destiny is a most entertaining battle of wits. The situation is unimportant and in a very old conventional key. What makes it magnificently alive after forty years is the rapier-play round human vanity. *Napoleon* (Mr. ROBERT SANSOM) represents all men in his sensitiveness in protecting his idea of himself, and the lady besieges the citadel of his inner satisfaction with continual forays and thrusts. Miss PAMELA GIBSON, who is a promising all-round actress, rides to these charges with a gay bravado, and has everybody on her side. Her high spirits, supported by Mr. PETER BORRETT's admirably futile Lieutenant, give just the right light drive to the piece to make the thrust and counter-thrust of tongues go flashing along. D. W.



NAPOLEONIC INTERLUDE

Napoleon MR. ROBERT SANSOM
A Lady MISS PAMELA GIBSON



SOVIET INTROSPECTION

Vassya MR. HOLLAND BENNETT
Tonya MISS KATHARINE KINEAR
Ludmilla MISS PAMELA GIBSON
Abram MR. DONALD ECCLES

Sport and Self-Determination

GERMANY'S hopes of winning the Davis Cup next year, we are told, have considerably brightened since the acquisition of Austria and parts of Czecho-Slovakia.

Herren Menzel and Von Metaxa are now part of the new German Empire. Yet there is no doubt that her position would be even stronger if the oppressed German minority in, say, America were to obtain the blessings of self-determination. Such players as Budge and Mako could easily be discovered to be living in German language "islands," the inhabitants of which were crying out for deliverance from their oppressors and tormentors. (No, I have not forgotten that Budge is reported to have decided to turn professional; but wouldn't it be easy to tell him now quite firmly that unless he revokes that decision he will be sent to a concentration camp as soon as the American-Germans are made free?)

And now I seem to hear the voices of those irritating persons—democratic legislators—making strident references to the rules of the Davis Cup Competition, those legacies of Versailles which were imposed by the governing body on nations too weak to resist. I can hear those voices arrogantly denying the right of Budge and Mako to play for the Greater Germany in that competition. Well, let me tell them that that sort of democratic hypocrisy will no longer be tolerated, and that if a Samuel Hoare or a Roper Barrett should stand in Germany's way the Greater-still German Reich will know how to deal with them. Roper Barrett may have been able to keep eighty million Germans down, but with the acquisition of German-America let him try if he dare to bring one hundred million Germans to their knees. He will then find himself face to face with the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis and everything that that implies. The great Mussolini will send his legions in support of the German claim for justice (Italy herself standing practically no chance of winning the Davis Cup) and totalitarianism will once more demonstrate its superiority over the weak and hesitant democracies.

But what will be the logical outcome of all this? What will happen when self-determination has been peacefully acquired for the German minorities in Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Italy, Switzerland, France, Belgium, Denmark, Poland, the Baltic States and Russia? There will only be Great

Britain and her colonies left to oppose Germany for the Davis Cup. "And her colonies," did I say? I beg your pardon. That seems rather doubtful at the moment. It is safer to assume that, say, Australia and South Africa will be handed over to Germany to satisfy her colonial ambitions. Which means that only Great Britain will be left in the field. In those circumstances will she challenge for the Cup? Would it be in the interests of European appeasement and of that Anglo-German friendship upon which the peace of the world depends that we should run the risk of defeating the Greatest Germany at lawn-tennis? I am by no means a peace-at-any-pricer, and as a public-school product I have been brought up to regard pre-eminence at sport as being of the most vital importance. But tennis, after all, is not a team game, and to suggest that we should run the risk of plunging the world into the ghastly horrors of a general conflagration—at any rate before the gaps in our defences have been filled—for the sake of gaining a cup of no particular value (and which should never have been created) is surely the height of insensate folly. Such a war would obviously settle nothing. In the season after the War the cup might easily be lost to Germany once again.

I therefore suggest that when the policy of *Mein Kampf* has been fulfilled the Davis Cup should be allowed to go by default. Only thus shall we prove the sincerity of our desire for appeasement amongst the nations of the world—or such of them as remain.



"THE WORST OF IT IS, MY HUSBAND DOESN'T TRUST DICTATORS."

The Hair of the Ages

A Study in Proportion

["White-haired women will go a shade called opera violet."—*Pronouncement by an expert in fashions for the hair.*]

I BRING good tidings. The fields grow
sere,

The wavering leaves fall fast,
And if for a moment the skies look
clear

We know that the spell won't last;
Winds will slice like a two-edged blade,

Feet grow thoroughly wet,
But white-haired women will go a
shade

Called opera violet.

Rates are rising and bacon's up,
Taxes soar to the moon;

Incomes wane; there may be a sup-
plementary Budget soon;

Cure there's none for a slump in trade
When the whole darned world's
upset,

But white-haired women will go a
shade

Called opera violet.

Foreign affairs are a source of care;

There's always a loud-voiced group
Who, if for a spasm the glass says
"Fair,"

Would land us back in the soup;
Wild commitments insensibly made

Are a blundering nuisance yet,
But white-haired women will go their
shade

Called opera violet.

Dark is the pessimist's dreary creed,
Gloomy his long-mugged song,

Yet we are men of the bulldog breed
Eager and keen and strong;

Ay, though the glory of Empire fade
Where never the sun has set,

We shall be ready and undismayed,
For who's downhearted and who's
afraid

With white-haired women to go that
shade

Called opera violet? DUM-DUM.

A.R.P. Note

"Will you please arrange for the supply of a dustbin as there is no receptacle for household refuse and in the event of an inspection by the Inspector this might cause trouble."—*Letter to Local Authority.*

"5. The 'Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood' was a circle of young artists led by Dante, Gabriel, Rossetti and Ford Madox Brown, who banded themselves together . . ."

Trade Paper.

But the four of them got to arguing,
you know . . .

The Tribute

ONE of our more successful meetings took place last week in the Village Hall—Canon Pramm in the Chair until old Lady Flagge arrived, twenty-five minutes late—

"No, no; don't move."

"Yes, yes; I insist."

"Really . . ."

"Please . . ."

"Well, if you really wish it . . ."

—and Miss Pin taking down the minutes as usual.

General Battlegate proposed, and Miss Dodge—beating Miss Plum to it by the merest fraction—seconded, that it is the wish of all of us to make a little presentation to Constable Hoof on his promotion before he leaves Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green.

Carried.

"I shall never forget," said Mrs. Battlegate in a clear, loud but sad voice—"I shall never forget one moonlight night, three years ago it must have been, when I was driving back alone from Brimpton St. Hill. (A whist drive and social, and I had presented at least three first and two second prizes. Possibly a booby as well, but that I do not recollect with any accuracy.) It was, as I say, a clear moonlight night. I came to the cross-roads where the Brimpton St. Hill turning debouches on to the main road."

Mrs. Battlegate paused here, I think in order that we might all take in the full force of the technical expression "debouches."

Nor was it without its effect. I saw Miss Pin's fountain-pen stop dead in its tracks when it reached the word, and Cousin Florence, I feel morally certain, tied a knot in her handkerchief for no other purpose than to remind herself that she must look up the meaning of it in the dictionary as soon as she got home. Canon Pramm said "Indeed" into the silence, and Lady Flagge at once leant forward and said "Order, please!"

"As many of you are probably aware, there is a *white line* just at the entrance to the main road. For some extraordinary reason which I have never been able to understand I found myself driving across it—slowly but still driving—*without halting*."

Even Lady Flagge did not attempt to break the hush that followed.

Personally, a sudden conviction—powerful, irrational perhaps but utterly irresistible—seized upon me that Mrs. Battlegate had joined a Group and was taking this opportunity of coming

clean. (As a matter of fact, as it afterwards turned out, there was nothing whatever in this powerful conviction, but it didn't make it any the less irresistible at the time.)

"The wheels of the car," continued Mrs. Battlegate, "were turning. I estimate their speed at something far below two miles an hour, but they were undeniably turning. I feel I must make that perfectly clear."

She paused again: I suppose to give anyone to whom she *hadn't* made it perfectly clear a chance of asking for further enlightenment. No one, however, uttered—unless one counts Laura, who hissed into my ear that she thought she should scream in another minute.

"At that moment Constable Hoof stepped out from behind the hedge," said Mrs. Battlegate—and if only one had had a pin that would have been the time to drop it with a crash that must have echoed through the Hall.

"Naturally I stopped dead, and he at once inquired whether I had seen the white line. And I simply replied, 'Constable,' I said, 'it is Mrs. Battlegate from 'Dheera Doon.'" And he said, 'I'm sorry, Madam, I didn't recognise the car. A lovely night, isn't it? Good-night, Madam.'"

"Then," said old Lady Flagge, "are we all agreed that we wish to mark our appreciation of Constable Hoof's uni-

versal popularity by making him a small presentation?"

We were agreed about that all right, but there it seemed agreement began and ended, and if Miss Dodge said the word "salad-bowl" once she said it twenty times, and the Canon was equally insistent with a chiming clock.

Miss Littlemug was all for something in leather—although not saying exactly what—but Miss Littlemug has only been some six months in our midst and was disregarded. Even Cousin Florence—a visitor at the house of Uncle Egbert and Aunt Emma—went no further than to say "What about a cigarette-case?" once, and that very quietly.

It must have been close on ten o'clock when the General stood up and with true military conciseness demanded that the question be now put.

Even then some twenty minutes more elapsed before an engraved ash-tray carried the day. And there will have to be another meeting called to decide upon the nature of the inscription.

As young Mrs. Slammer of the Post Office said, "Constable Hoof was very much liked, wasn't he, 'm? He overlooked such a many little things."

Something tells me that the precise wording of this tribute is going to present difficulties. E. M. D.



"MY ORDINARY ONE IS IN THE LAUNDRY."

American Slang

A Glossary for Elder Readers
VIII.

Two-time loser. A convict who has served two prison sentences. If he has served three he is called a three-time loser. This was the original meaning of the term. However, skipping from prison to marriage (and I know men who would hesitate to call that a "skip") we find that a man who has been married twice is now also referred to as a two-time loser, and if he has been married three times he is called a three-time loser. If he has been married four times he is called a hopeless nut, unless he is a European nobleman who marries American heiresses and demands a cash settlement each time he's gotten rid of. In that case he's called everything under the sun by the rich American papas who have to dig down in their jeans and dredge up the required wad. Sometimes of course the noblemen are bogus, in which case they often get impatient and do not wait around for a divorce and cash settlement but simply expedite things by disappearing with the family.

Ice. Diamonds. A great deal of ice is swiped in real life, but it can't compare with the amount swiped in plays, films and novels dealing with society crooks of the suave type—the sort who can gurgle their tea with one hand and burgle a dowager with the other. There has even been quite an amount of ice lifted by these charming lads on the wireless, and fiction detectives are reported to be already laying their plans for the thwarting of society crooks when they make their inevitable appearance in the field of television. But while society crook films have done quite well, film magnates confidently predict the s. c. film will never replace the

Horse opera. Wild Western film. When the hero throws himself on board his faithful haybag (horse) and takes out across the Wide Open Spaces in pursuit of the villain, who has got well lushed up on red-eye and then shot up the town, anyone in the audience will tell you that you're going to see Action with a capital A. Off the screen, on the other hand, the hero of the horse opera may be an impossible

Drip. Dolt; ninny; nincompoop. Or on the other hand he may be a harmless old duffer with store teeth (false dentures) and a bald head which makes

it necessary for him when working before the cameras to wear a

Divot. Toupee. But regardless of what he is off-screen, once on the screen he becomes a superman who is fearless in conflict, chivalrous toward women and kind to animals. In fact it becomes no trick to see him in fancy's eye as sitting down every night to write his dear old mother and send his love to his dear old father, who is probably a poor but honest

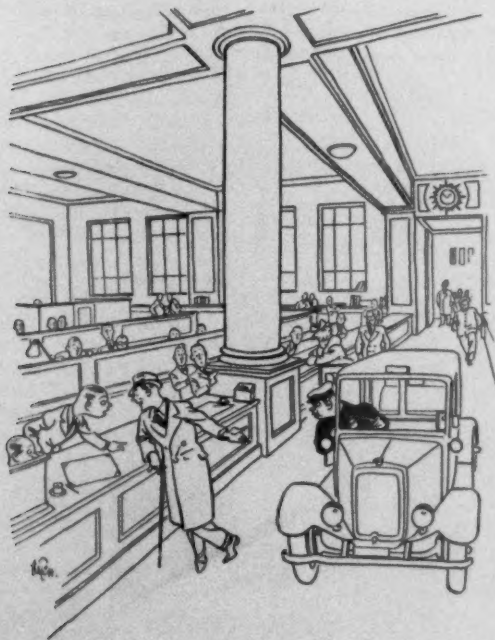
Plough jockey. Farmer. As for the villain of a horse opera, besides being a low-down ornery rattlesnake, a yellow skunk and an all-round jolly good cut-throat, not to mention a loud-mouthed bully given to abusing weaker people verbally to great lengths and at every opportunity (in other words, a jack-of-all-tirades), he is usually something of a cattle rustler. In case somebody is hanging his face over our glossary who doesn't know what a cattle rustler is, let me explain that he is a person who has a propensity for letting other people's cattle stick to his fingers. The cattlemen in the film, led by the hero, sometimes capture the villainous rustler, whereupon he becomes the reluctant guest of honour at a

Necktie party. Hanging. With this accomplished there is usually little left for the director of the horse opera to do but push the hero and heroine into each other's arms and perhaps let them do a little

Mugging. Close-quarter osculation, known to the film-world as the clinch. The word has its root in the term *mug* [L. *muggus*, *mugga*, *muggum*; ME. *muggis*, AS. *muggas*, *muggu*; cf. F. *muggerie*, It. *muggicci*] face. But here, we're becoming academic. Let's come down to earth again. Indeed, if you really want to come clear down to earth get down on your knees and we'll all shoot a little

African golf. Dice. *Syn.*, craps. So called because it is a game much favoured by Afro-Americans. The best thing you can do when shooting African golf is to roll a natural (seven or eleven), which wins; but there are some of us who never seem to roll a natural, who seem born to roll mostly snake-eyes (two) or boxcars (twelve), which lose. So let's get up before some shrewd African golfer wins all our evil-root. Besides, we might spoil the crease in our trousers and then someone might refer to one of us as Old Baggypants, or worse yet, if his pants are shapeless and sagging, as old

Droopydrawers. One whose trousers have the general half-mast appearance of those of a low comedian. By way of contrast we should consider the



"I DON'T THINK HE QUITE TRUSTS ME."



"YER CAN'T SAY WE 'RE NOT CENTRAL 'ERE. ONLY A THREEPENNY RIDE ON THE BUS FROM THE RITZ."

callow type of youth who merits the epithet

Eaglepockets. One whose trousers rise to ridiculous heights, sometimes even halfway up his chest, and with the cuffs at least six inches off the floor. With a few isolated exceptions, those who deserve this name are dismal examples of young manhood known alternatively as twirps, wet firecrackers goons and drips (*see above*). The effect described is achieved with the help of a stout pair of braces, usually gaudy. The assumption is that the trouser-pockets are at a sufficient altitude to attract any eagles who may be in the

neighbourhood with an eye out for a good nesting-place. The sensible young woman, when she finds she has been spending her time with a male cipher of this type, wastes no time in

Giving him the rollers. Breaking off their association; avoiding his company; shoving him into the discard. So much for trouser topics, and now just for fun let's race to the bottom of the page. You all pile into the concrete-mixer (rattletrap automobile) and I'll do something I've always wanted to do—I'll ride the

Putt-putt. Motor-bike. So nicknamed because when you get on one of

the things (thusly) and start it up (observe closely) and then drive off (watch just how I do it, now), it goes putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-putt-hey, how do you stop these things?—putt-putt-putt—

"A warden's job in war-time will be a lonely, dreary, unpicturesque business, and anyone who does not believe in it profoundly for its own sake, who 'will lose interest' unless permitted to 'bang the bugle and blow the drum' sort of thing, had better keep out of it altogether. He will be of no earthly use in war-time."

Letter to Daily Paper.

And very little use in an orchestra."



"I TELL YOU I DON'T KNOW A RHYME FOR 'JUDITH.'"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

Cities and Men

ALTHOUGH *Guns or Butter* (PUTNAM, 10/6) had presumably gone to press before the recent crisis there is nothing in it to be dismissed as out of date. All that has happened is that the potential, if not the inevitable, has become the actual. In the pictures presented of Vienna at the time of HITLER's triumphal entry, of Prague immediately afterwards, and of Berlin, the events of September are implicit. And very vivid pictures they are, for although Mr. R. H. BRUCE LOCKHART has shaken the dust of Fleet Street from his feet, to resume the wandering life which is more congenial to his fancy, he is a brilliant reporter. He knows just what to tell and has a magnificent talent for telling it. During the last two years he has revisited much of Europe from Oslo to Bucharest, observing individuals and masses and talking with the great and the simple, with kings and cabaret singers. His portraiture, whether of the famous or of the anonymous, is lifelike, his local atmosphere authentic. The anecdotes with which he lightens high debate are always to the point. Having read his book, one feels that one knows better what contemporary Europe is like and what she thinks of ourselves. Everywhere, or almost everywhere, Mr. LOCKHART found an urgent longing for peace; everywhere, or almost everywhere, a desire that England should speak with greater clarity and a little less unction, and should be strong. One looks for a post-Munich sequel.

The Enigma of Elgar

ELGAR's finest orchestral work was the "Enigma" Variations, but he himself remains a still greater enigma. Mr. THOMAS F. DUNHILL, in *Sir Edward Elgar* (BLACKIE, 5/-), gives us a generous but judicial estimate of the man and

his work, holding him to be the most outstanding figure in our musical life of recent years, but does not altogether succeed in explaining the miracle, for it is little less to the amateur, of ELGAR's rapid and complete mastery of the resources of modern orchestration with the limited means of study at his disposal. He learned the organ and violin from his father, a very competent organist, who kept a music-shop in Worcester, but he never went to any school of music. As a member of the Three Choirs Festival orchestra he heard a great deal of music and seems to have absorbed all he heard. He paid occasional visits to London and made one trip to Germany, where he heard and was deeply impressed by the music of SCHUMANN. Otherwise he may be compared with MELCHIZEDEK in that, musically speaking, he had no ancestry. He was not a great innovator, but his style was his own. Mr. DUNHILL deals faithfully with the sugary sentiment and lack of distinction of his minor works and the unfortunate choice of the books of words of his early cantatas and oratorios before *Gerontius*: there the spirit of the music is absolutely wedded to that of NEWMAN's poem. EDGAR was singularly fortunate in his home-life, and his devoted wife proved an unerring critic of all lapses in taste. The book is fully illustrated with portraits and facsimiles and contains excellent analyses of all ELGAR's principal works.

A Most Laughable Nightmare

KAFKA, idol of the gloomier highbrows, wrote a comedy, and a very readable one. *America* (ROUTLEDGE, 8/6) is the English translation. It begins in a tiresome KAFKA way; the stoker episode on the boat bringing KAFKA's innocent Karl to America is artificial and contorted. The entertainment opens when Karl is found by his rich uncle. The life of the dollar-bound in New York is good comedy of a nightmare order. The horrible hobos *Delamarche* and *Robinson* appear and take charge of Karl when he is thrown out by his uncle. Then come the hotel at Rameses, and Karl a lift-boy—the most circumstantially convincing American



"... AND NOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE DRIVER?"

lift-boy ever devised in Europe (which KAFKA never quitted). Details are there down to the oil-spots which somehow all lift-boys find on their clothes, and what lift-boys do with their spare time. Another disaster—*Robinson* in liquor this time—and *Karl* finds himself the servant of *Delamarche*, who is now battenning upon the woman *Brunelda*, who in turn is battenning upon a worshipping husband whom she never sees and detests. *Robinson's* degradation—living like an animal turned out on the balcony of *Brunelda's* flat; *Robinson's* diet—liquor out of a perfume bottle and sardines left over by *Brunelda*; *Robinson's* reward—an occasional glimpse of mountainous *Brunelda* in *négligé*, these are the depths to which *Karl* is expected to sink. He escapes—to the great Nature Theatre of Oklahoma. Then the startled and dizzy reader finds that KAFKA never finished his story.

The Masters of Game

This book is SEELEY SERVICE'S,

A "Lonsdale" work, and here is (I'd wager that I'm right in this)

A winner in that series;

It's called *The Lonsdale Keeper's Book*,

By gamekeepers it's written—

Men who to famous manors look

In every part of Britain.

Here are the coverts and the moor,
Here's marsh and corn and clover,
Here's how to see your birds mature
And how to "send them over";
And here we learn, of river-men,
What river-watch repute is,
Or, high above the Highland glen,
We're shown a stalker's duties.

Each man who wrote his hand herein,
Expert and professorial,
Of Fur, of Feather or of Fin,
Has left him a memorial;
Conservative, our sons shall state
To newer-creed concoctors,
"Thus said, in 1938,
The 'Lonsdale's' learned doctors."

Eating Defensively

Sir WILLIAM CRAWFORD knows precisely what things are popular at breakfast-time and what is the percentage preference for biscuits or cake at tea. He knows how many people think dinner comes in the middle of the day and what social grade, from D to AA, one must attain before presuming to refer to it as lunch. He knows how many bones go to a herring and how many calories to a banana. He knows all this largely because a lot of tactful ladies have been putting tactful questions to very patient housewives and the answers have been written down on a big form before being worked out in graphs and decimals and tabular statements. The grand result of all Sir WILLIAM's knowledge, as declared in



EXPERIENTIA DOCET?

Wife of Two Years' Standing. "OH YES! I'M SURE HE'S NOT SO FOND OF ME AS AT FIRST. HE'S AWAY SO MUCH, NEGLECTS ME DREADFULLY AND HE'S SO CROSS WHEN HE COMES HOME. WHAT SHALL I DO?"
Widow. "FEED THE BRUTE!"

George Du Maurier, October 31st, 1885.

The People's Food (HEINEMANN, 12/6), is to be a glorious advertising campaign which shall persuade everyone to spend so wisely and so well on "defensive" foods that we shall all eat more eggs and fruit and vegetables and fish, drink more milk, absorb more calcium, more iron, more advertising literature, more vitamins. The farming industry is to take a new lease of life and the nation is to have no more colds in its head. Advertisement, he roundly declares, is synonymous with education—maybe the public will consent to learn. He is an advertising practitioner.

Vie de Jésus

During the last forty years of his career the late Sir HALL CAINE worked at a *Life of Christ* (COLLINS, 10/6) designed to divert the method of RENAN to the estimate of a believer. He read widely, he paid several visits to Palestine, and more than three million words of text and notes have now been fined down by his sons in accordance with his known intentions. The book is so obviously a gesture of love and of partisanship that it seems ungracious to suggest that so subjective a treatment has precisely the value and interest—neither less nor more—of the personality behind it. The writer distrusts Revelation, he regrets that much of Our Lord's procedure—even the Ascension—was opposed to the laws of Nature, and the miracle of Cana, which gave more to drink to men who had already had too much, is denounced no fewer than four times. The style is for the most part restrained, almost businesslike, but the hand of the novelist is only too apparent in such extremely odd suggestions as a possible passion of JUDAS for MARY MAGDALENE.

Welcome, Jeeves!

Totleigh Towers, Glos., seat of that repellent magistrate, *Sir Watkyn Bassett*, is the scene of Mr. P. G. WODEHOUSE's latest epic work, *The Code of the Woosters* (JENKINS, 7/6), a story enriched not only by the presence of the incomparable valet but by a situation which taxes to the full even his outsize and fish-fed brain. The trouble is a silver cow-cream which *Sir Watkyn* has bought in under the nose of *Bertie's* uncle *Tom*, and which he is considering trading for the priceless services of the latter's master-broiler, *Anatole*. To prevent such a crime against humanity *Aunt Dahlia* (scourge of the Quorn and envy of Billingsgate) has come to the Towers, prepared to stop at nothing; and her fellow-guests include the *Führer* of the British Blackshorts, our old ally *Gussie Fink-Nottle*, the ruthless girl, *Stiffy Byng*, and, naturally, *Bertie* himself. They are all very speedily out of their depth in cross-currents of passion, malice and misfortune, from which they could only have been rescued by the undimmed genius of *Jeeves*. Needless to add, a book to buy and hoard.

Super-Spy

If you combine an appetite for spacious adventure with a fine contempt for the persistent verities (which are as inimical to hearty cut-and-thrust adventure as hairy

Bolsheviks and sinister Orientals are to its wily Odysseuses, and as seldom fatal) you will like *The Second Plan*, by Captain CHARLES GRAHAM HOPE (HODDER AND STOUGHTON 7/6). Most of us have trod the golden road (or rather the golden arm-chair) to Samarkand in our day, and here you can tread it, with a wealth of excitement by the way, in the footsteps of the Indian Secret Service. You may not discover what the Second Plan was exactly. It is not too clear that the Foreign and Political Department of the Government of India ever did; but what matter? It's the finding out, not the discovery, that burns the midnight amp. But anyway, thank Heaven for ships and trains and camels and international plotters and heavy disguises, and above all for Bolsheviks. They may have made a nasty mess of

Russia, but they've been a godsend to the folk that have to take their thrills at second-hand.

Vibrations

Quite apart from a problem that invites probing, *Death of an Innocent* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6) derives entertainment from the delightfully human relations existing between *Superintendent Black* (irreverently called "*Smuttery*") and his right-hand man, *Inspector Wales*. Add Mr. DeHavilland to this engaging couple and you have a most refreshing trio. Readers of Mr. JOHN NEWTON CHANCE's novel, *Maiden Possessed*, will remember that *DeHavilland* was a red-bearded giant who sought and found plenty of trouble. But although in the course of time he has toned down, he is still an excellent example of a lovable blunderer. Mr. CHANCE is a descriptive writer of considerable power, but he must be careful not to let his ingenuity run away with him.

Dangers Ahead

Distinct elements of tragedy were to be found among the house-party which Lady CAMPBELL has collected in *The Moor Fires Mystery* (HEINEMANN, 7/6), and the setting in an inhospitable Scottish mansion increases the tension of a well-told story. No sooner was the host of this party murdered than two people, who might be described as outsiders, stepped right into the limelight. Of this pair Lady CAMPBELL's eccentric investigator, *Simon Brade*, was the more insistently energetic, but in spite of his activities the chief honours fell to a little nursery governess who, among a bevy of sophisticated women, surrendered none of her naturalness and charm. The mystery is not very difficult to solve, but the able telling sustains the interest.



"HAVE YOU ANY HOUSES SUITABLE FOR THE HEAD-QUARTERS OF A MISSIONARY SOCIETY?"

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Charivaria

A WRITER thinks that people who exhibit themselves to the public in glass cases should be prosecuted. Before or after pressing Button B?

★ ★ ★

"CAMBRIDGE BEATEN
A SATISFACTORY MATCH."

The Times.

Dark-blue glasses somewhere?

★ ★ ★

It is pointed out that men with big bushy beards cannot wear gas-masks. Many fathers are already warning their children that Santa Claus may not think it safe to come round this year.

★ ★ ★

Mr. Punch Finds an Ally.

"I had, over a period of years," continued the witness, "formed the opinion that he was irresponsible. That feeling has been developed by his most recent action—his decision to marry."—*The Times.*

★ ★ ★

"There are always alternative routes to success," says an essayist. People who go in for crossword competitions will have noticed this.

★ ★ ★

An M.P. says he hopes that in the interests of peace all parents will forbid their children to make effigies of Hitler or Mussolini for the Fifth this year. An intensive "Guy British" campaign seems to be indicated.

★ ★ ★

In America a boxer who demanded and received five thousand dollars before entering the ring was counted out in the first round, although nobody actually saw the blow. One theory is that his conscience smote him.

★ ★ ★

It is suggested that the Liberal Party should be returned to power. What, and let him become Dictator?



It is learned that one of the first actions taken by the Germans on occupying the Sudeten regions was the setting up of concentration camps. This is known as putting the Nazi jug into the Danubian basin.

★ ★ ★

Allez Oop!

"Wanted, Pianist, vaults bar, six nights weekly."—*Advt. in Harrogate Paper.*

★ ★ ★

A short-story writer says he does all his literary work stretched out prone on beach or field. During the long winter evenings he proposes to try a full-length novel on the hearthrug.

★ ★ ★

A Canadian who has landed in this country is trying to discover how many relatives he has. We suggest that the quickest method would be to win a penny pool.

★ ★ ★

"When learning to skate," advises a rink instructor, "always look upwards and not at your feet." Of course if you look upwards and *still* see your feet you're doing it wrong.

★ ★ ★

"Early rising is all very well," says a writer, "but where does it get you?" Frankly, it gets us down.

★ ★ ★

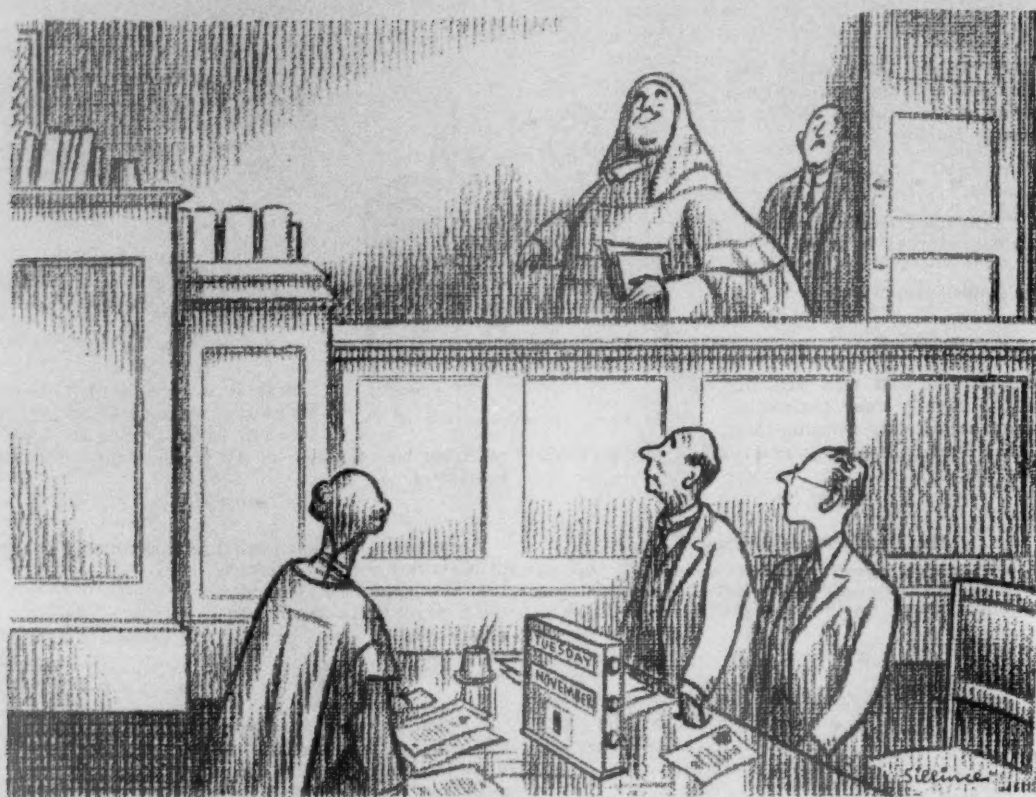
"Although there was such a dearth of fouls the game was never dull and the spectators were kept on their toes with expectation the whole time."—*Malta Times.*

After all there was always a chance of a good trip or a neat piece of hacking.

★ ★ ★

A woman reader says she always invites vacuum-cleaner salesmen into the house and offers them tea and home-made cakes. She says many of them are so grateful that they let her off with one of the cheaper models.





"RABBITS!"

Struggle for Fame

"THE editor says we're not original enough," said my collaborator. "But I've thought of a system for being original. Let's try it. It might bring us a lot of money."

So we ate our last mouldy crust, stuck some more rags in the gaping windows, shoed away the rats and sat down at our rickety table with pen and paper to become immortal.

"The story," said my collaborator, "shall be set in a stratosphere balloon. That's original, isn't it?"

I thought it was, fairly, so I said "Not very" in a doubtful sort of voice to keep his Muse screwed up to fever heat.

"Next," he said, "location. Where would a stratosphere balloon be? In the stratosphere, you say, having gone up, or on the ground, not having gone up or having come down."

"Three locations," I said, "none of which seems to be strikingly original."

"No," said my collaborator. "That

is what I mean. That's the system. We think over each situation as it arises and work out all the possibilities. Then we don't use them. That's originality."

"It is," I agreed. "It's also blank sheets of paper, and even the most exotic periodicals don't pay us for sheets full of nothing. Otherwise we could have been rich before."

"The stratosphere balloon," said my collaborator, "is at the bottom of a well. Write that down. It's very original. And the next thing is to count up all the characters who are likely to be in a stratosphere balloon at the bottom of a well, and not use them. Who are most likely to be in stratosphere balloons?"

"Stratosphere balloonists," I said. "Especially Professor Piccard."

"Then be sure we don't mention stratosphere balloonists or Professor Piccard. Now who wouldn't be in a stratosphere balloon?"

"I wouldn't," I said.

He waved at me impatiently. "Who else?"

"Deep-sea divers," I said brightly, "might not be likely to be found in a stratosphere balloon. Let's have deep-sea divers."

I was eagerly going to write that down but my collaborator stopped me with a pitying hand. "The fatal all-too-easy association of ideas," he said, "that has led to all our unoriginality in the past. Did I not say the stratosphere balloon was at the bottom of a well? Well—sea—divers. See?"

I sighed and longed for fame and a hot grilled steak. The crazy door of our attic clattered hollowly in its warped and twisted frame. The icy draught guttered the shrinking candle, and I thought of lager and birthday cake.

"In the stratosphere balloon at the bottom of the well are the lovely Lady Patience Eggwhisk, Plutarch her faithful hound—"

"Pluto," I murmured.

"Plutarch," insisted my collaborator, and I thought perhaps that was original too. "And a bookmaker."

"No lover?" I asked. "Not a handsome, clean-limbed, upstanding—"

"He's not original," my collaborator said scornfully, putting one of my boots to simmer over the wretched embers of our dying fire. "There's the clergyman. An old, fat, dissolute, wheezy, unfrocked clergyman who lives by doping electric hares on greyhound racing tracks. I don't think anyone has thought of that before, have they?"

"Not hares," I said respectfully, "only dogs."

"The Lady Patience," went on my collaborator, "has invented a patent electric dog for chasing hares: remote controlled, with infinitely variable speeds, reverse, and whistles to its owner when it gets lost."

"Lovely," I said, writing feverishly. "Nobody ever thought of a dog like that."

"The West Wittering Hunt are about to place an order for three thousand of these electric dogs to replace their hounds, which have taken to fraternising with the local foxes, exchanging deputations and ceremonial visits, saying, 'Why should we hunt one another? We only want to live in peace. It's the leaders who make the hunt. Let them——'"

"Propaganda," I warned quietly.

"So the base bookmaker seeks to steal the plans, and the Lady Patience, fleeing, has to make her escape in a stratosphere balloon, taking the plans with her. When she is eight hundred and forty-two thousand feet above the earth the gasbag bursts, and the bookmaker and the clergyman, stowaways, as you will have guessed, rush from their hiding-places and fall grovelling at her feet, imploring her to save them. The balloon falls with a sickening thud——"

"Splash," I murmured, and wrote "splash."

"—but they have been so high the world has spun away beneath them and it is yesterday. The bookmaker realises this, and remembering that to-morrow Claustrophobia will win the Donnington Plate, ties a bet to Plutarch's collar and sends him off to Stuart McDougal. 'Doggies always pay,' he murmurs, patting the faithful hound's head."

"When the Lady Patience realises how much money he will win, she begs him to marry her, and the ceremony is performed there and then by the clergyman, who turns out not to have been unfrocked after all."

"Are they still in the well?" I asked breathlessly.

"All except Plutarch," said my collaborator. "We'll see about getting them out after supper."

We ate my boot with joyful hearts, and after touching up our story a little, sent it to the kindest editor we knew—the one who sometimes writes our rejections instead of sending us a slip.

Three days later he sent it back, saying he did not think it was original enough. It was too much like the event referred to in the enclosed cutting.

We read the enclosed cutting, which was from a very truthful daily paper, in embittered silence, and longed for the quiet waters of Lethe. "Miss Lucretia Bourgeois," it said, "Chicago's only deep-sea woman riveter, was married to-day in a diving-bell at the bottom of the River Amazon to Bud Squeager, a bookmaker. This is the first time a diving-bell has been used for the ceremony in the River Amazon. The happy couple, accompanied by the bride's pet bloodhound, Kleptomania, have left for their honeymoon by high-altitude airplane."



"NOW THEN, IF YOU DON'T BEHAVE YOURSELVES, MR. CHAMBERLAIN 'LL GIVE YOU TO THAT HITLER."

A Matter of Definition

I do not know what Peace is. But I think
Some people write it in a different ink
From others. I myself could never state
What aspirations were legitimate.
I know that, seizing a heraldic chance,
Our good King Harry claimed the Crown of France.
I know a broken-down Republic stands
A vassal State just now in German hands.
And possibly the thing called Peace will come
When we have given up to Nazidom

POLAND, LITHUANIA,
AFRICA, ROUMANIA,
HUNGARY, DENMARK,
TURKEY, THE UKRAINE.

I often ask what Peace is. Some declare
When Hitler sighs it to the Autumn air,
When Goebbels, kneeling by his little bed,
Breathes it to heaven ere he lays his head
On the white pillow, when Von Ribbentrop
Ingeminates the word and will not stop,
To them it does not mean a girl with wings
And not much on except her underthings,
But some large bulkier lady, full of facts,
Commercial penetrations, axes, pacts

And little bits of ASIA,
EGYPT and DALMATIA,
PERSIA, MADAGASCAR,
And ALSACE LORRAINE.

I want to know what Peace is. Does it mean
That half the countries that have ever been
Ought to be seized and poisoned by a chap
Who has his own ideas about the map,
Whilst we look on and smile and call him friend
And shake his hand and tell him at the end
That everything he did was for the best,
Whether in Timbuctoo or Bucharest,
So long as Rule Britannia, Rule the Waves,
Britons never, never shall be slaves,
But only PATAGONIA
And BELGIUM and ESTHONIA,
TARTARY and ICELAND,
PORTUGAL and SPAIN? EVOE.

A Dangerous Canard

It is now some months since Marthinus Jacobus van Staden, a resident of Johannesburg, was informed (as reported in *The Natal Mercury*) by a certain Jim Duamalo that his stomach was infested by a live bat, and the failure of the Lord Chief Justice, in his speech to the News-vendors' Benevolent Institution, to make any reference of the affair has caused surprise in legal and journalistic circles. What, it is asked, lay behind his apparent unwillingness to make use of a story so rich in interest for lawyer and newspaper-man alike, and so well suited to the atmosphere of an Annual Banquet?

It is no part of our purpose to give support to the suggestion that the Lord Chief Justice has himself a live bat in his stomach or indeed is likely in the immediate future to adventure among or in the vicinity of bats, so as to put himself in the way of such a discomfortable contin-

gency. Those in closest touch with Lord Hewart, who are best qualified to judge of his personal tastes and inclinations, declare positively that in the event of His Lordship desiring to assimilate a bat he would rightly insist that the creature be first rendered innocuous by boiling and afterwards tricked out for the palate with every art and refinement of cookery. With this contention we have no wish to quarrel. A man who has been trained up in the classical tradition, to whom the very gender of *vespertilio* has been as familiar since boyhood as that of *curculio*, is not likely to throw over the teachings of a lifetime for the gross satisfaction of pitch-forking a still sentient bat down his throat as if it were an oyster.

Equally unworthy is the insinuation made in certain irresponsible quarters that the Lord Chief Justice may be harbouring one of these pests unawares. Though innocent of the deliberate consumption of bats, Lord Hewart may (so runs the dangerously plausible argument) have inadvertently introduced one into his system by yawning widely in his garden at dusk, sleeping with his mouth open in a belfry, or committing some similar indiscretion in the small bat house at the Zoo. Such rumours, baseless as they are, are not without danger, and the persons who disseminate them would do well to remember that there is still a law of libel and slander in the land.

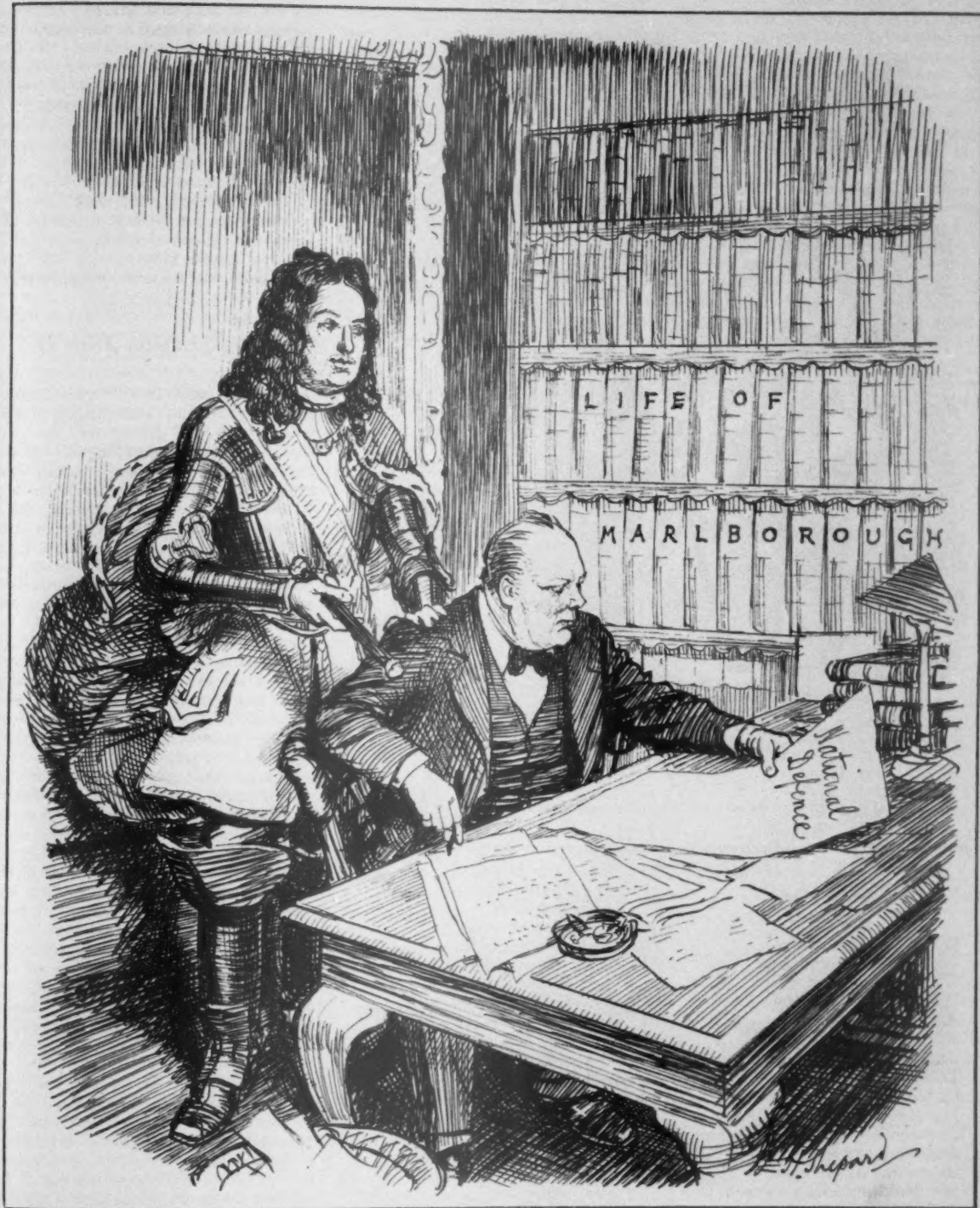
We have said that such rumours are dangerous. Apart from the inevitable loss of respect for and confidence in a judiciary believed to be riddled with bats, there is an even graver risk of panic among the general public. The most pernicious feature of the whole deplorable story is the assumption that it is possible for a live bat to inhabit a stomach without the patient's being aware of it. Once let that belief gain widespread currency and the nerve of the British people, already stretched to breaking point by the events of the last few weeks, may give way entirely.

Upon what does this belief rest? Upon the trivial circumstance that a certain Marthinus van Staden of Johannesburg had no notion he had a live bat in his stomach until informed of it by Duamalo. But all the evidence goes to show that van Staden in fact had *not* a live bat in his stomach. So convinced were the Johannesburg Magistrates' Court of this that they fined Duamalo £25 for obtaining money under false pretences. *There never was a live bat in van Staden's stomach—there never will be a live bat in any-one's stomach* (least of all the Lord Chief Justice's) unless he or she deliberately courts such a disability.

We are led to the conclusion that the whole affair has been one of those stupid storms in a tea-cup which from time to time ruffle the surface of our national life. The attempt of certain mischievous persons to blacken the character of the Lord Chief Justice and in doing so spread alarm and despondency among the people of this country has failed, and failed contemptibly. If in some way the prime movers in what looks, in the absence of more detailed information, remarkably like a conspiracy can be brought to book, more good than harm may well come of an irritating but happily short-lived *furor*.

What are the true facts? Lord Hewart was speaking, as he had every right to speak, of the work of the British Press. He referred, to choose his own words more or less at random, to "the skill, judgment, the labour and the pains, the discrimination, restraint and the enterprise, the superlative ability, vigour, care and learning, the wit, the humour, the dexterity, vivacity and the versatility, the dutifulness, the courage, the conscientiousness and the ceaseless hard work which creates and recreates a good newspaper."

Why, after this reference to *Punch*, he should be expected to advert to a purely hypothetical bat in the stomach of a South African is a question which must be left to more imaginative or less well-disposed pens to answer. H. F. E.



A FAMILY VISIT

"It was a great work, and I wish you could now add another chapter to your own career."



"WHAT DO YOU MEAN—YOU'VE ONLY BEEN BIRDS-NESTING?"

Smartness

WHAT fun, I suppose,
To be just one of those
Who arise in pink wraps
If it's sunny perhaps
And do nothing at all
But pat dogs in the hall
And keep drifting upstairs
To append further pairs
Of trousers or eyebrows
For strolling with highbrows
Through haystacks and hedges
And over cut edges
Or grottos in Florence
(See Huxley and Lawrence),
Addressing the nearest
Inanely as "Dearest"
And getting divorces
As matters of courses
From people they simply adored!

What fun to drop in
For a pink-tinted gin
At a pub or a peer
Or whatever is near,
To keep joining forces
With thoroughbred horses
And any weak friends
Having endless week-ends!
How nice to roll home
And lie fallow in foam
With plenty of scope
For the pink-tinted soap
While mushrooms grow older
And outlets get colder;
But what does it matter
How flabby the batter
Provided there's hock,
Port and claret in stock
And nothing's too nice to afford?

I envy those ones
With their fussed-over sons
Who can run up to town

For a radiant rub-down
Or a pat here and there
From dear Georges to the hair—
The people, I mean,
In last week's magazine
Comparing race-cards
With sound men in the Guards
Or enjoying a joke
With A. N. Other bloke;
The people who tan
At Le Touquet or Cannes
With something pale pink
Being brought them to drink
On a little round table.
I wish I were able
To be one without being bored.

Friars Marston Digs In

WE have given Mrs. Heckbody her own way over the camouflaging of the village hall, and except for the fact that Joe Stebbins' shoulder will not be the same for some weeks as it was before he fell from the oak-tree up which he had been encouraged to climb in order to report upon the appearance of the hall from the air, no echo of that controversy remains. But it would be easy to overrate the significance of this gesture of conciliation. It is not to be regarded in any general way as the earnest of a new spirit of reason and compromise, but rather as an expression of the common feeling that the issue was too small a one to provide a worthy battleground for all the conflicting forces of national effort represented in our microcosm of society.

Around the questions of billeting and evacuation, for example, the differences of opinion are still acute. A calm survey of the probabilities seems to indicate that the parallel efforts of the village evacuation committee and the county billeting committee, both of which are working in our midst like two colonies of beavers who have never been introduced, will result in Friars Marston being relieved of its present set and equipped with an entirely new set of women and children with dramatic suddenness and efficiency immediately upon the outbreak of war.

Friars Marston is far too old and shrewd a village to turn down such a proposition as this out of hand, and the prospect is being carefully and responsibly debated every night in the bar of the "Anchor." A certain school of opinion tends to think highly of the proposal, arguing that you never know what your luck may bring you, and that anyway at such a time it is a duty to sacrifice the private for the public good. On another evening a bitter

pessimistic spirit will dominate the deliberations. Heads will be shaken and the spirits of the young and hopeful will be dashed by forebodings that another set would be as bad or worse. Some have even gone so far as to say that it would be better not to have a war at all than for such a thing to happen.

In another aspect the financial side of the billeting problem has come in for careful scrutiny and discussion. Reliable local economists have worked out that six children at eight-and-six a head would be roughly as good as being unemployed on two Labour Exchanges at once. But—and here is the snag—can one rely upon there being enough children to go round? It would be churlish to criticise the emergency arrangements that were made for billeting children upon us during the crisis week, but it would be foolish to deny that as they stood they would have created a number of cases of severe hardship.

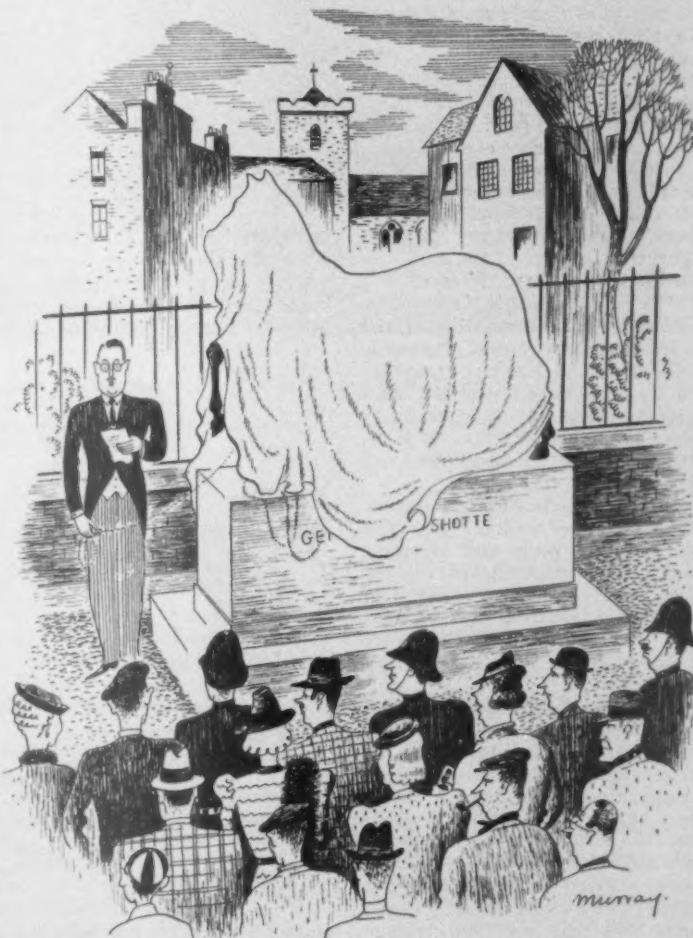
Eddie Mullins, for example, who has not been able to work since his hands got soft while he was being a temporary postman during the Christmas of 1934, put in for eight and was not allowed more than three. When he went up to make trouble about it he could not get near the billeting officer for the angry crowd from cottages on the bank who had been left out of the scheme altogether through some oversight and had not been allotted a single child between the ten of them. At the last moment on the Thursday it was reported that our people were in negotiation for a small batch of children who had been overlooked somewhere on the other side of London, but that they were having some trouble with the parents, and even if we had been successful in getting hold of these there would still have been a pitiful shortage. As one of the village elders has happily phrased it, this was the kind of muddle that the crisis was sent to us to expose.

The physical defences of the village have not been neglected. The system of trenches on the green has been much admired by visitors. In its general conception it appears to visualise an attack by tanks with artillery preparation and infantry support from the direction of the Manor, and it provides a well-considered line of retreat along communication trenches converging almost upon the floor of the "Anchor." Cutting into the sewer was a mistake, but on the other hand the practice that it gave the decontamination squad must have done good, and it is a pity that the opponents of the scheme who, inspired by memories of the Hindenburg Line, favoured an elaborate

system of deep roomy dug-outs with electric lighting, heating and ventilation and every modern convenience, cannot have the generosity now to put a term to their criticism.

As the matter is in a sense *sub judice* until it comes up before the appropriate committees next week it is perhaps improper to discuss the propriety of Mrs. Heckbody's action in kidnapping one of the girls who had been training with the first-aid squad and making her driver of the car with the auxiliary fire-pump; but it would be idle to ignore the fact that it has aroused a good deal of bad feeling, and if it had been known it is to be doubted whether Mrs. Heckbody would have got her own way about the hall, promise though she did to supply the paint free.

And of course there is still the question of the shops on the green. Several of the most influential residents—the grocer, the butcher and the chemist, to name only three—feel strongly about the neglect of this vital matter. If an enemy wanted to paralyse the life of Friars Marston what would he bomb? Would it be the village hall? Would it be the "Anchor"? Would it be the Manor? Would it be even the fancy new trenches? No. If an enemy that knew his way about were determined to throw the place into confusion and to strike at its very heart it would just concentrate on the shops on the green where all the business is. And what have we done to meet the danger? So far, I regret to say, nothing.



"BEFORE UNVEILING THIS STATUE OF GENERAL JAMES BIGSHOTTE MAY I REMIND YOU THAT THE FUND FOR THE ARTIST'S FEE IS STILL ONLY HALF SUBSCRIBED."

At the Pictures

COLOURED HISTORY

OF course *Robin Hood's* men are understood to have been merry, but their merriment in *The Adventures of Robin Hood* is something fierce. You never saw people so uproariously amused at some schoolboy remark about the emptiness of a head or the fullness of a belly; and by the sheer energy of their guffaws they batter laughter out of quite a number of the audience.

Well, presumably there was no particular subtlety about the wit among Saxons in 1191, and one goes to this picture for the simple things—simple fun, simple adventure, simple villainy: all simple, but all boundlessly energetic. "An outstanding film for children," as the British Film Institute bulletin says; not so good for adults, though the most complex intellectual should find much of it worth at least looking at. The colour I found a constant pleasure, however bad the dialogue was.

You know the story. Most of it is here—the meeting with *Little John* and *Friar Tuck*; the splitting of the arrow at the archery contest; the comic *Sheriff*—though he (MELVILLE COOPER) does not play so large a part as I seem to recall he might have played; *Lady Marian*—though she (OLIVIA DE HAVILLAND) plays a rather larger one; and so on.

ERROL FLYNN makes a good swaggering *Robin*, and does several FAIRBANKS tricks, climbing walls and swinging down from trees; the villainy is in the capable hands of BASIL RATHBONE (*Sir Guy of Gisbourne*) and CLAUDE RAINS (*Prince John*). There are several good fights.

Sixty Glorious Years—you know this story, too. It strikes a few of the notes that were not struck in *Victoria the Great*, as well as one or two that were—but this time in colour. I should like to put on record the purely personal opinion that *Sixty Glorious Years* seems to me a prodigious waste of talent and that there was not very much of it that I enjoyed; but I realise that I am in a minority and that you, the average reader, should not take any notice of what I say. This is a film exceedingly worthy, done with great care and conscientiousness, in many places well

acted—ANTON WALBROOK as the *Prince Consort* is very good, as he was before (though one doubts whether the PRINCE was anything at all like that)—and one which you will certainly be expected by all your friends to have seen. Presumably therefore



DOWN IN THE FOREST SOMETHING STIRRED

you should see it. But I cannot help wondering how many of you will actually enjoy it and how many will be hypnotised by the arts of publicity



THE LOVE-BUG BIT HIM

Libby VIVIAN LEIGH
Saggers CHARLES LAUGHTON

and by Good Form into believing that you did, or failing to admit that you did not.

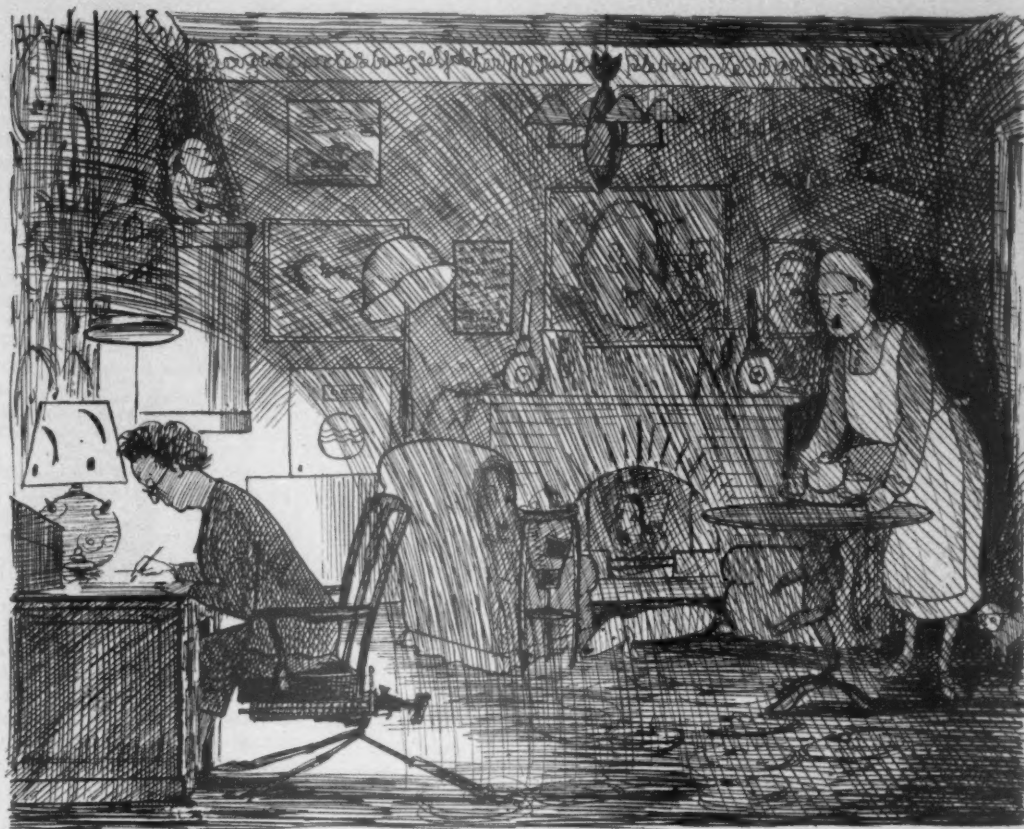
The dialogue has been praised; I shouldn't praise it myself.

St. Martin's Lane has a machine-made sort of story, but bits of the film are very good and Mr. LAUGHTON seems to me superb throughout. No other of his performances has given so completely satisfactory an impression.

Whether such a story is worthy of such ability is a question; but let's assume it is. Built—by CLEMENCE DANE—around the life of a queue entertainer, it gives Mr. LAUGHTON opportunities to recite, with appropriately wild gestures, *The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God* and *If*. It also gives VIVIAN LEIGH an opportunity to portray a Cockney girl whose vowels become pure under the stress of emotion; but Miss LEIGH does the shallow grasping character of the girl so well that the accent doesn't matter. Miss DANE, I think, doesn't do it so well: it seems that "*Libby*" had a change of heart at the last moment and pushed her way through a crowd of fans, crying the make-up unbecomingly down her cheeks, to speak to *Charlie* in his tramp's clothes. I find that hard to believe.

Others in the present crowd of new films include *If I Were King*, *Too Hot to Handle*, *The Cheat*, and *Carefree*. The first of these I found rather dull, except for a very interesting performance by BASIL RATHBONE as *Louis XI.*; the second, though highly entertaining, is unabashed "hokum." *The Cheat* is SACHA GUITRY's brilliant *Le Roman d'un Tricheur*, with "dubbed" English commentary by NORMAN SHELLEY: the only fiction-film I ever knew of that could stand the process of "dubbing" with so little harm. Mr. SHELLEY does it very well, too. By all means see this, whether you saw the French original or not. And *Carefree* is the new ASTAIRE-ROGERS, which means that a very large number of people will go to it as matter of course. Expensive, glittering, charming, funny, as soaked in new IRVING BERLIN tunes as *Alexander's Ragtime Band* is in old, it is well up to standard. I should never tire of watching Mr. ASTAIRE's fascinating golf-dance, in which he drives off ball after ball to music. In the picture he is a psycho-analyst (perfectly adjusted, of course). R. M.

"... We can look not only the world but ourselves in the eyes without blinking."
The Times.
Perhaps—but not without squinting.



"... I AM BEGINNING TO THINK I HAVE BEEN LETTING THINGS WORRY ME TOO MUCH LATELY, BECAUSE ..."

Hallowe'en

(After—a century or two after—R. Burns.)

AYE, we'd a mirthfu' Hallowe'en
At the farm o' Middenbraes—
As blithe an evenin' 's e'er I seen
In all ma livin' days;
Say what ye like, ye canna doubt
It's grand to get an evenin' out—
An' the very kind ye read about
In Robbie Burns's lays.

The neighbours came from near and
far
Till all along the dyke
Was motor-car on motor-car
An' bike on motor-bike;
An' some poor souls that hadna known
We didna leave them on their lone—
We got them on the telephone
As easy as ye like.

Well, first we had the wireless news
O' Hitler an' the Czechs,

An' Mister Sich-an'-Sich's views
On A.R.P., an' nex'
We switched the set to other ploys,
The sort that everyone enjoys—
The Broadway Sing-and-Swing-It
Boys
Wi' Red-Hot-Rhythm Rex.

Red-hot it was; ye needna talk;
It made the rafters spin;
Big Apple, Foxtrot, Lambeth Walk,
Wi' Rumbas san'wiched in;
I kenna which I liked the best,
An' when we halted for a rest
We'd cabbary from Buda-Pest
An' comics from Berlin.

The only snag was auld Jock Caird;
He wud ha' had us go
An' play at bogles in the yaird,
Or set us in a row

Speirin' our fortunes in the dark
Or bitin' apples—what a wark!—
Or roastin' chestnuts, save the mark;
An' he'd ha' made it so

Hadna his sister's dochter Jean
Foreclosed the argument;
"Wha's wantin' *that* at Hallowe'en?"
Says she. "I never kent
The like. Ye're dottled, Uncle; nix
On all yer daft-like parlour-tricks;
It's fun we want. Who says the flicks?"
An' to the flicks we went.

Aye, aye, it was the grandest night,
A rare old Scottish spree;
What wud ha' been The Bard's delight
Had he been there to see!
A fool old ways an' customs spurns,
But, man, when Hallowe'en returns,
A real old bit of Robbie Burns
Like yon's the thing for me! H. B.

A Vegetable Report



There are only two forms of plant life which have any place in literature—trees and flowers. Who could imagine a story written around a vegetable-garden—a romance of mangel-wurzels, say, or a tragedy of cucumbers?—*OMAR KRAYTAM.*

THE other day I was indulging in the harmless pastime of reading an evening newspaper when my eye was caught by a heading which seemed to demand explanation:—

"TRAGIC CUCUMBER."

The news-item was as follows:—

"THREE MEN KILLED AND 50 INJURED IN FIGHT."

"A dispute over a cucumber between two villagers resulted in three men being killed and about 50 injured at Abu Tisht, in Kena Province, Upper Egypt."

"A man unintentionally stepped over a cucumber during a busy market-day. A fight ensued and soon men of neighbouring villages were taking part. Rifles, knives, clubs and tree branches were freely used, says a Cairo Reuter message."

You will notice that the motive of sordid gain appears to have been entirely absent from the dispute. It was not a question of disagreement over the price of the cucumber, still less of its attempted theft. The motives actuating the two parties to the quarrel are, in fact, somewhat obscure; and it is my presumptuous intention to attempt some analysis of these motives and thus in part justify the writing of this lamentable article, which has already taken up so much valuable space and distracted thousands of readers from the performance of their daily work.

The skin of the cucumber is of a dark green colour, while the inside is white when freshly cut, turning brown on exposure to air. A cross-section of a cucumber displays a marked radial symmetry.

The trouble seems to have begun when the party of the first part stepped over the cucumber. This act, though performed, as Reuter puts it, "unintentionally," apparently incensed the party of the second part. Reuter does not tell us which, if either, of the two disputants was the owner of the cucumber, a point which appears to be of some importance. Did A step over his own cucumber, to be thereupon attacked by the enraged B? Or was the cucumber the property of a third party or of the State?

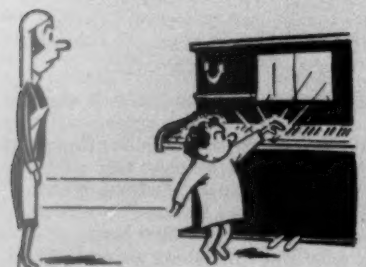
The average cucumber is 1 lb. 7 ozs. in weight and 9·6 inches from tip to tip. It is bent in an arc of a circle of radius 3·7 feet.

There is nothing in the wording of the report to guide us in this matter; and I should like, if space permitted, to examine each of these possibilities in detail. As it is, however, some latitude must be allowed me in exercising my discretion as to what is or is not probable; and I submit that neither of the hypotheses mentioned above was in fact the true state of affairs. A reasonable man, exercising ordinary care and judgment, would reasonably assume that A, the party of the first part, stepped—albeit unintentionally—over a cucumber which was the sole and personal property of B.

If we admit this point we have, in my opinion, three principal alternatives for the cause of the quarrel.

It will be noted that A stepped over the cucumber—not on it. There is no suggestion in the report (though verbal evidence on this point might be admitted) that damage, hurt or injury was inflicted on the vegetable in question. Yet B, the owner of the cucumber, was so incensed by A's seemingly harmless act that a serious quarrel ensued. To what could this be due?

The first possibility which suggests itself to me is that a cucumber in Upper



DAVID
LANTON



"Yes, I DID READ THE BOOK, BUT OF COURSE IT DON'T GIVE YOU A PROPER IDEA OF THE PICTURE."

Egypt is regarded as a menace to life and property in the same way as a poisonous snake is so regarded. If this were so it would obviously be the duty of every citizen, finding a cucumber lying across his path, to tread on it—provided he was sufficiently well-shod to fear no injury to himself by the act. A, however, deliberately and ostentatiously neglects to perform this duty, and by stepping over the cucumber leaves it unharmed and free to pursue its devastating course, spreading who knows what misery and destruction in its wake. The public-spirited B (whom we have unjustly suspected of owning the cucumber), though ordinarily a mild man, cannot allow such a flagrantly antisocial act to pass unrebuked; A, a quarrelsome selfish fellow, does not take B's admonition in good part; and soon they come to blows.

The cucumber season in these islands begins in May or early June and lasts until September. The principal counties which produce cucumbers are Rutland, Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire; and during the height of the season the extensive cucumber-fields in these areas afford a delightful prospect, the dark green of the fruit being peculiarly restful to the eye.

A second possibility is that there may in the province of Kena be a local superstition that to step over a cucumber is unlucky. To an unbiased mind, after all, there is no reason why a cucumber should not contain as much intrinsic ill-fortune as a ladder; still less why the act of stepping over should be any less fatal than that of walking under. Indeed, if a cucumber is to be unlucky at all, the ill-luck must almost inevitably attach to the act of overstepping, since no one could walk under a cucumber lying on the ground (unless it were a prodigiously large one), and it is unusual to find a cucumber suspended, for whatever reason, in mid-air.

The third and final possibility is to my mind the most likely of all. There is a well-known legend that when Romulus and Remus were building the original city wall of Rome, Remus saw fit to display his contempt for the still puny barrier by leaping over it; whereupon Romulus slew him. There was no question of personal injury or damage to property; it was a question of honour. Is it not possible that the owner of this cucumber had placed it on the ground to indicate the limits in one direction of that area of

the Abu Tisht market-place which he considered as for the time being his lawful place of business? And such being the case, if one of his neighbours was to defy this injunction against trespass, and do so in an insulting manner (with, no doubt, a sneer upon his lips)—if A were to do this, would not B, as a man of honour, resent it?

Although a cucumber consists of 92% water by weight, it is nevertheless a valuable article of diet. It is usually eaten raw, but it may equally well be fried, boiled or grilled. If the latter, the skin should be removed before cooking is begun, and the cucumber then grilled very slowly, with frequent basting.

I omitted, in quoting Reuter's message, to give the final paragraph:—

"The fight lasted nearly five hours until the District Chief of Police arrived at the head of a large police force. Several arrests were made."

There the report ends; and though it is satisfactory to know that order was eventually restored, there is one question that springs naturally to the reader's mind. *Did they arrest the cucumber?* We shall never know.

I wonder if mangel-wurzels are romantic?

"If"

"YOUR 'if' is the only peacemaker," said Touchstone; "much virtue in 'if.'"

If the fool was right it is no wonder there is peace to-day, for never was the air so full of ifs.

All arguments about Foreign Affairs are a conglomeration of "ifs," all leading to assertions which are incapable of proof. That is why every citizen capable of speech is now an expert on Foreign Affairs: that is why every argument about Foreign Affairs leads to no particular conclusion; and that is why the wise man keeps out of them as long as he can.

A really good ifmonger will take you back twenty years. Here are a few:—

(1) "If, in 1918, the Allies had marched to Berlin the Germans would have realised that they were beaten (which they never did) and all this would never have happened."

That is countered by—

(2) "If we had not gone on blockading Germany so long, and made such severe peace terms, the Germans would not have realised so bitterly that they were beaten, and all this would never have happened."

Then there are two very big ones—

(3) "If in 1919 America had ratified the Anglo-French-American Treaty of Alliance the French would not have been so touchy about 'security,' they would have disarmed and all this would never have happened."

(4) "If America had not been asked to swallow the League of Nations she might have accepted the Anglo-French-American Alliance, and all this would never have happened."

(5) "If France had not marched into the Ruhr all this would never have happened."

(6) "If France had marched into the Rhineland when the Germans did all this would never have happened."

(7) "If we had done something about Manchuria Italy would not have done anything about Abyssinia and all this would never have happened."

(8) "If we had done something about Manchuria before Singapore was ready all this would have happened much sooner."

(9) "If we had done something about Abyssinia the Germans would not have marched into the Rhineland."

On the other hand—

(10) "If we had done something about Abyssinia everybody would have marched in all directions."

And anyhow—

(11) "If anybody else would have done anything about Abyssinia we should have done anything about Abyssinia."

But then—

(12) "If we had taken the lead in doing things everybody else would have followed our lead and done things too."

But we must never forget that—

(13) "If we had imposed oil sanctions on Italy there would have been a war in the Mediterranean and that would have been Herr Hitler's opportunity."

Although of course—

(14) "If we had imposed oil sanctions Italy would not have been able to conduct a war for more than about ten minutes."

Ah, yes, that's all very well—

(15) "If America had come in—but *would* she have?"

All this time, by the way, let us bear in mind that—

(16) "If France had disarmed all this would never have happened."

On the other hand—

(17) "If Britain had *not* disarmed all this would never have happened."

Nor should it be forgotten that—

(18) "If we had rearmed more quickly and efficiently much of this might have been avoided."

But then—

(19) "If those who say that now had not hotly opposed rearmament earlier we might have rearmed earlier and all this would never have happened."

On the other hand, it is only fair (they say) to say that—

(20) "If we had had a decent foreign policy and stood by the League of Nations they would have supported rearmament."

Ah, but they also say that—

(21) "If you had had a decent foreign policy rearmament would not have been necessary."

Then of course (and this is a juicy one)—

(22) "If we had been kinder to the nice German Republic in the 20's Herr Hitler would never have happened and Germany would now be eating out of everybody's hand and have a nice quiet Two-Chamber Parliamentary Constitution on the British lines."

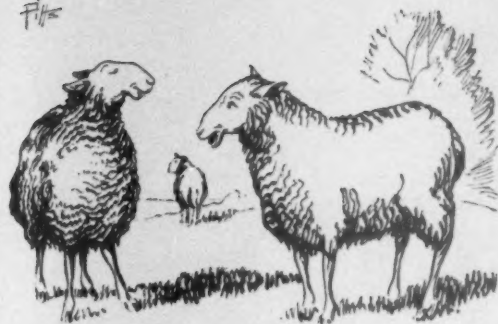
And of course—

(23) "If you had a nice quiet democratic Germany like



"MOVE UP? BUT I'M JUST WAITING HERE FOR MY WIFE."

F.H.



"DEAR ME, NO! ONE OF THE KENTISH CANTERBURY'S."

that there would be none of these fierce demands for colonies and things."

On the other hand—

(24) "If you had a nice quiet democratic Germany like that there would be no reason why they should *not* have colonies and things, and everyone would have given her all the colonies long ago."

What of course is really worrying is that

(25) "If France had marched when Germany occupied the Rhineland Japan would never have invaded Northern China."

And

(26) "If Japan had not invaded Northern China Italy would never have intervened in Spain."

What is more—

(27) "If we had prevented Italy from intervening in Spain Germany would never have appropriated Austria."

On the other hand—

(28) "If we had not offended Italy over Abyssinia she would never have intervened in Spain."

Remember, by the way, that—

(29) "If we had fought Japan, Germany and Italy at the same time there would have been no war."

And

(30) "If we had intervened in Spain, China and Manchuria those unfortunate countries would be much better off than they are now."

On the other hand—

(31) "If we had left Abyssinia and Czechoslovakia alone those unfortunate countries would be much better off than they are now."

(32) "If we were not going to fight about Czechoslovakia we should not have taken such a firm line before."

On the other hand—

(33) "If we had taken a firm line before we should not have had to fight."

(34) "If France and Russia and Czechoslovakia had

not tried to encircle Germany Germany would not have been so touchy."

But—

(35) "If we had resolutely joined the circle all would have been well."

(36) "If we had said firmly six months ago, 'We can't do anything about Czechoslovakia,' our influence in Europe would now be much bigger."

(37) "If France had said firmly six months ago, 'We denounce our treaty with Czechoslovakia,' France would not have lost her honour."

(38) "If we had firmly clasped the hand of pagan Russia we could have knocked pagan Germany endways."

(39) "If Russia had been more forthcoming we could have dealt with Herr Hitler."

(40) "If Russia had been called in it would have ruined everything."

(41) "If we had had more aeroplanes we could have defended Czechoslovakia."

(42) "If we had had all the aeroplanes in the world we could not have defended Czechoslovakia."

(43) "If the democracies imitate the totalitarian States in every possible way they will sweep totalitarianism from the face of the earth."

(44) "If we are to preserve our liberties we must begin by surrendering them all."

(45) "If three years' rearmament produces 'gaps' in our defences, how long will it take to make a loop-hole or two?"

(46) "If you were Prime Minister (or President Roosevelt) what exactly would you do next?"

A. P. H.

CLOAKROOM



"LOOK AT IT THIS WAY, SIR. IT'S THE ONLY ONE LEFT, SO IT STANDS TO REASON IT'S YOURS, SIR."



"LOOK AT THE MOON WASTING HIS BATTERY!"

To My First Grey Hair

ALL Heil! my new yet venerable Herr!
 (I greet you as a German would an Aryan
 In Tel-Aviv.) Amazed, I stand and stare
 Silent, as though upon a peak in Darien.
 Amazed I stand
 And seek my wits to gather,
 My razor in my hand,
 My face all lather.

Amazed, but not with shock or pain or rage.
 To tell the truth, I'm feeling rather gratified,
 As one who sought a covenant with Age
 And unexpectedly has found it ratified.
 Why should I swear
 And make my head do penance
 When it has made me rare
 Among Lieutenants?

Rare as an Aryan in Tel-Aviv
 Are grey-haired subalterns. They'll think my
 knowledge is
 Up to the form, I verily believe,
 Required for entry to our two Staff Colleges.
 Certain I am
 That now I ought to get a
 Place on the list for Cam-
 berley or Quetta.

And so, since it has taken you, mein hair,
 More than a quarter-century to reveal yourself,
 When next I venture to the barber's chair
 I do beseech you to conceal yourself.
 What should I do
 If an ill-omened morrow
 Should really bring you 'to
 The grave in sorrow?

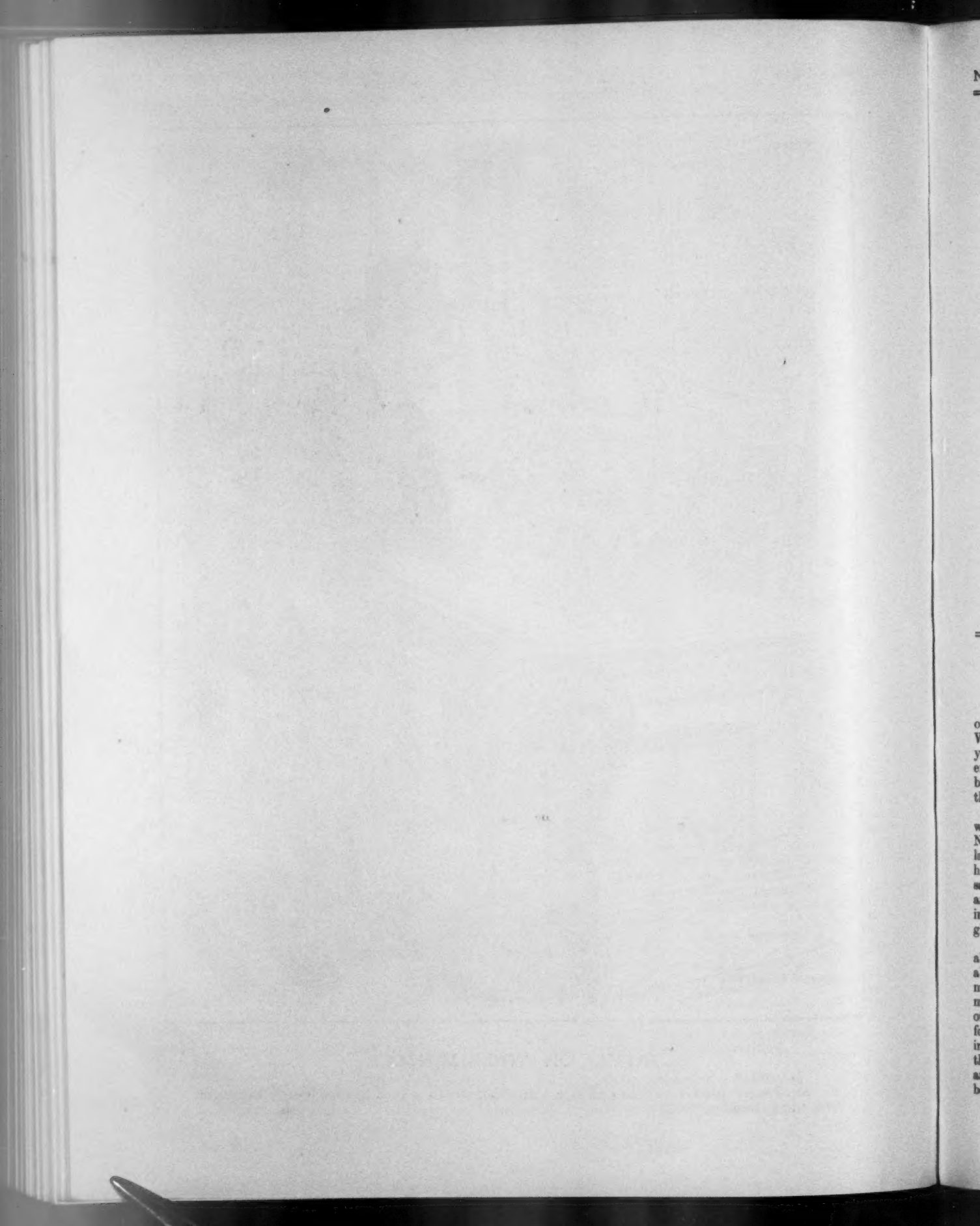
Perish the thought! I will not contemplate
 Even for a moment the resultant agonies;
 Who could envisage such a fearful fate?
 Hitched to your star alone my humble wagon is.
 On you be peace!
 On you my constant blessing!
 But *not* on you be grease
 Or patent dressing.

Wider be your dominion on my head,
 Where other hairs (mouse-coloured, with a dull
 tip) lie;
 Broader and farther be your kingdom spread;
 Be grey, be fruitful still, and multiply.
 Let others book
 Scalp-massage or a lotion:
 To you alone I look
 For my promotion.



TRYING ON THE GAUNTLET

Mr. Punch. "It comes a little expensive, I'm afraid, but it's a good line for friendly handshakes with strong men."





"No, I DIDN'T HAVE TO TRAIN THEM—THEY JUST DO IT NATURALLY."

No Laughing Matter

My brother-in-law and I usually get on very well together when we meet. We usually meet once every eight years or so, and if we can possibly extend that period to ten we do it, because we find we get on better still that way.

The last time I saw him was three weeks ago. He had come over from New York for a short holiday in England and, as is his habit, he planted himself on me in my flat in London to save himself the expense of staying at an hotel. Though he gave me no choice in the matter I was of course only too glad to put up with him.

The first few hours passed off agreeably enough. He was able to tell me about the various financial and matrimonial disasters that had overtaken most of my friends on the other side of the Atlantic since we last met, and for a while I found him quite entertaining. But his stock of news, as is always the way, gradually exhausted itself, and by dinner-time he had already begun to grow rather tedious.

It was not until after dinner, how-

ever, when we happened to get on to the subject of humour, that things became really serious. He had picked up a copy of a humorous magazine to which I have subscribed regularly for over twenty years and, after glancing carelessly through its pages, he tossed it aside with the remark that he honestly could not see what people found to laugh at in a rag like that.

This disparaging comment on my favourite comic magazine, coming as it did from a mere brother-in-law, cut me to the quick. I informed him haughtily that no other journal could boast of a higher standard of humour and that it was read and enjoyed by cultured people in every country of the world.

"Oh, I daresay it's good enough for the grandmothers of retired colonels," he conceded, "but if you want something really amusing you ought to subscribe to one of the American magazines."

I emitted a scornful sound through my dilated nostrils.

"If that is a sample of them," I retorted, nodding towards a facetious American periodical he had introduced, together with his baggage, into my flat, "then I don't mind telling you I

couldn't smile at a single joke in it to save my life."

My brother-in-law has a natural tendency to become stout; but now, as he swelled with indignation, he seemed to assume the proportions of a small elephant. He seized his despised magazine, opened it out at a certain page and handed it over to me as though he were handing me an ultimatum.

"There!" he said. "I defy anybody to look at that joke and not laugh."

I examined the joke and the illustration for a full minute in silence. Then I handed it back to him.

"Well," he asked after a pause, "what do you think of it?"

"I think it's too stupid for words," I said.

My brother-in-law's face became mottled. He heaved himself out of his chair and approached me.

"Will you just repeat what you said?" he asked threateningly.

I repeated it. He came a step closer to me.

"I've a good mind to box your ears for that," he said.

I was simply thunderstruck. I hadn't been spoken to like that since I left school some forty summers ago.



"THE PROFESSOR HAS COME WITHOUT HIS NOTES ON THE 'ORIGIN OF MAN,' BUT HE WILL RECITE AND DO A LITTLE TAP-DANCING FOR US."

What's more, I considered it was most undignified for two elderly gentlemen like us, with substantial incomes, to be speaking to each other in that fashion. Still, I wasn't going to stand there and be intimidated by my own sister's husband, so I took a step towards him.

"Go on, then!" I challenged him. "Box my ears if you dare!"

He dared to box them. I picked myself up off the carpet and confronted him once more.

"I dare you," I said, "to box them again."

He dared to box them again. I took my head out of the coal-scuttle and stood up to him a second time.

"Do you want me to box them again?" he asked.

"No," I said.

"Then will you admit that joke I showed you was funny?" he said.

I drew myself up disdainfully to my full height. "Never!" I said.

His eyes narrowed. He caught hold

of me by my double-chin and shook me.

"You're going to laugh at that joke," he said, "even if I have to throttle you."

His fingers tightened round my throat and he started counting up to three. I remained pale, half-choked, but self-possessed. When he got as far as "two" he relaxed his grip a fraction.

"Are you going to laugh," he demanded, "or are you not?"

It took me several seconds to find my voice. I finally found it squashed to a falsetto. "I am not!" I squeaked resolutely.

"Very well," he said, releasing me abruptly and pointing to the door, "you will please leave this place at once then. People with no sense of humour are not welcome here."

I went straight into my bedroom and packed my bags. As I was going out of the front-door he gave me one last chance. He came rushing out into the hall with the magazine in his hand

and held the illustrated joke in front of me again.

"If you care to laugh at it now," he said, "I will forgive you and let you stay."

I shook my head coldly. "My sense of humour," I said, "is not a bauble to be battered about. Good-bye!"

"Good-bye!" he replied curtly and closed the door behind me.

It was not until I was out in the wet and windy street that I suddenly realised that he had driven me out of my own flat.

Coincident

THERE were four of us in the dentist's waiting-room: the tall man, the fat man, the short man and me. The fat man was reading a newspaper.

"Ha!" he barked of a sudden, amusedly. "Beg pardon, gents," he added, meeting our pained glances. "It was this here letter made me

laugh. P'raps you'd care to share the joke." He smoothed the paper and read aloud: "Sir,—My uncle, Mr. Justice Black, used to tell of a curious coincidence which occurred in his barrister days. He found himself on one occasion in the strange position of representing a man named Kettle who was bringing an action for slander against a woman called Pott. I wonder if any of your readers know of similar coincidences. Yours faithfully, Arthur Pest."

He laid the paper down and beamed at us. "That's what I call curious," he said. "See? Pott'd been calling Kettle black. Wonderful—two names just happening to fit in like that."

"Nonsense!" said the tall man rather rudely. "Things like that don't happen. People make 'em up so as to get letters in the paper."

"Oh, come, Sir, come!" put in the short man, leaning forward earnestly. "Just because your own experience does not chance to include such a circumstance, do not deny the possibility of its occurrence. A cousin of mine in his college days took part in a race in which there were three competitors. My cousin came in second. The man who came in first was named Wynne. The remaining competitor was named Loos."

The fat man beamed delightedly. "Very curious, that, Sir," he approved, "but not more curious than the time my father was in a lift as got stuck between floors with five other persons in it, every one of which exceptin' my father was named Holdfast."

"Were they all one family?" demanded the tall man sharply.

"They was," admitted the fat man defiantly. "What's more they all had the earache."

"Coincidence upon coincidence," sneered the tall man.

The short man shot him a glance full of reproof and turned to me.

"Have you no contribution to make, Sir?" he appealed. "Can you not persuade our doubting friend here that the arm of coincidence, though long, is none the less real?"

"I once knew a man named Belt who was often tight," I responded after some thought.

The short man coughed and looked hurt.

"But wait a minute," I added, sitting up suddenly. "There is a coincidence of sorts about me. I ought to have thought of it before, considering where we are. You see, my name happens to be Pullen."

"No! Really?" cried the fat man and the short man simultaneously.

"My name," said the short man,

trembling with excitement, "is Fillingham."

"Mine's Drill!" shrieked the fat man, leaping to his feet.

We all looked expectantly at the tall man.

The tall man got up. He was shaking with rage.

"I am not in the habit of giving my name to total strangers," he shouted.

"I come here to undergo a serious and painful operation, and I am expected to take part in an infantile parlour-game with a gang of superstitious

pagans. I shall not stay here another—"

The dentist's nurse came in. "Now, let me see. Who is next?" she said, casting a witching eye over us.

"I am," snapped the tall man.

"Oh, yes," smiled the nurse, "of course. Come this way, Mr. Struggles."

"PARACHUTE JUMPING.
Victoria and Disraeli."

Headings to "Broadcasting" column in "The Times."

Hand in hand?



"WHEN I WAS IN GREENLAND, JACK, I 'EARD AS THE ESKIMO RUBS 'IS LUMBAGO WI' SNOW."

At the Play

"GOODNESS, HOW SAD!"
(VAUDEVILLE)

ON one score this play has made up my mind irrevocably. If ever I have a play put on I shall call it something like *Lumbago, My Foot!* and on the day after it appears I shall persuade any two friends of mine who really understand the beauty of self-sacrifice to take up a public stance, say in the middle of Jermyn Street, and begin a tremendous argument at the tops of their voices as to whether or not my title is a silly one. When they are getting hoarse and the crowd is about twenty deep, umbrellas will be drawn and used to the detriment of second-best bowlers; a charge of brawling will pretty soon be preferred; after the manner of his kind the magistrate will be unable to refrain from facetious comment on the matter of the argument, which the evening papers will welcome, as always, to their front pages; and my play will be a huge as well as a deserved success. Those responsible for this one (headed by Mr. PETER BULL, who produced it at his Perranporth Theatre last summer) seem to have neglected to follow up their advantage systematically, but already the title is inducing fierce discussion between total strangers, and that is half the battle.

The other half is more in doubt. The play is one of those light little comedies which in themselves do not merit a London production, being neither very witty nor very well-written, but which nevertheless have peaks in the way of character-studies which have a trick of standing out in memory after the topography of much more interesting work is long forgotten. It suggests an obvious comparison with that tenacious runner, *The Wind and the Rain*, for both are about young people and have their scene in provincial lodgings; by this measure it falls short in its dialogue and in the handling of its sentimental side.

And yet? Well, there is first of all *Father*, a German trainer of performing seals, a guttural large-hearted fellow who has known better days when he toured with his beloved *Fritz*, the only elephant, apart from such prodigies as the jungle may have begotten and kept to itself, which ever mastered the harp with trunk and ears.

Fritz, not having to be interned during the War, was lost, and so now *Father* lives for two seals sufficiently celebrated to be *persona grata* in the bathrooms of theatrical lodgings. *Father*, played with inspiration by



LOOKING AS BARNUM MIGHT
HAVE LOOKED

Captain Angst . . . MR. ARTHUR HAMBLING

MR. ARTHUR HAMBLING, has a childish attraction it would be difficult to exaggerate; I can only say that when the second of the seals recovers enough

from what has seemed a fatal bout to knock back its evening slab of halibut it is as though a great cloud has lifted from the Vaudeville Theatre.

Then there is *Mother*, *Father's* wife and partner, a middle-aged blonde whose girlish vivacity a long graduation in the Halls has done nothing to diminish; such a good sport and oh, so coy! Miss KATHLEEN BOUTALL judges her "bromides" and simperings to perfection; and one scene especially, when *Mother*, coming in to a late supper a little the better for wear, finds a stranger reading on his stomach and pours a whole pot of tea into her hand-bag, provides one of those grand convulsive minutes when laughter mounts and mounts. And, third of a notable trio, there is *Mrs. Priskin*, queen of theatrical landladies, daughter of the rugged North, asp-tongued but, when you know her, soft of side. Miss MARY MERRALL takes her splendidly.

These three are in the nature of accessories after the fact; the fact is, briefly, that a Midland Repertory theatre is on its last legs when a famous film star, returning to the scene of his early struggles, is recognised and persuaded to take a part for a night. By doing this he bestows all the publicity which is needed; less successful is his seduction of the most ingénue member of the company and his attempt to carry her off to America. It is not very much of a story and it periodically bogs itself in adolescent heart-searchings, but its lighter scenes are quite an entertaining picture of repertory life. As the heroine and her room-mate Miss JILL and Miss JUDITH FURSE give sound performances, Mr. HUGH SINCLAIR brings in an authentic smack of Hollywood, and Mr. FRITH BANBURY as the puppy of the company helps on the humours of the play. Under Mr. TYRONE GUTHRIE's production every member of the cast speaks admirably clearly. In the single set yet another FURSE, Mr. ROGER K., has brilliantly captured the whole essence of "digs." What a mantelpiece he has amassed! ERIC.

"BOBBY, GET YOUR GUN"
(ADELPHI)

A pedant would claim—but this show is not written for pedants—that *Bobby, Get Your Gun* ought really to be called *Bobby, Get Your Birth Certificate*, because it is the lack of that useful document, known to exist somewhere in Cuba, that gravely embarrasses *Bobby*,



LANDLADIES ALWAYS KNOW.

Mrs. Priskin MISS MARY MERRALL
Carol Sands MISS JILL FURSE

Earl of Lockwood (Mr. BOBBY HOWES), and his dignified aunt, a lady don of some standing (Miss BERTHA BELMORE). There is a fine ancestral place and, apparently, an income going with the title. We see it all in the last Act, and so how it was well worth while for Bobby to leave "Camelford" in May Week and go out with his aunt and his faithful man, *Pettick* (Mr. WYLIE WATSON), and to encounter all sorts of dangers in Cuba, where his father was the late "The Kid," a bandit. There are other bandits, notably *Flash Tomkins* (Mr. DAVID BURNS). *Flash* never removes his bowler-hat nor his cigar, not even to go to bed, and he shoots quickly and often, so he is quite sufficient to create a succession of striking situations single-handed; but, for good measure, he is supported by "the boys." There are *Pablo* and *Leona* and *Pete* and *Sam*, and above all there is *Lupe* (Miss GERTRUDE NIESEN). Miss NIESEN's part does not call for that high level of wit which she can command. It does call for a good deal of cool vamping, which she commands as well. And there are some very entertaining scenes between Miss NIESEN and Mr. WYLIE WATSON. Whenever Mr. HOWES and Mr. WATSON get into deep water their favourite solution is to pretend to be mad, and their madness takes the form of being a penguin or a rabbit.

At this very light level the piece runs its cheerful course. I think it would gain if there were a little more conviction and definiteness behind the story. *Flash Tomkins* is too real a stage gangster for his activities to be treated quite so casually in the production, and the musical numbers have to be very good—which cannot be said of them—if they are arbitrarily and successfully to hold up lively action, searches for treasure, plot and counter-plot. In the Cuban scenes all the ingredients are there. We are quite prepared to lose ourselves in a story both amusing and exciting, but the revue tradition, that the plot must not be allowed to get the upper hand, is all too servilely followed.

The dialogue has some excellent phrases. Quite early on Miss BERTHA BELMORE, as the woman don, delights us by explaining

to her young pupils that she has abandoned slimming as she now recognises that "there is a divinity which



TOUGH GUYS: PROFESSIONAL—

Flash Tomkins . . . MR. DAVID BURNS
Lupe MISS GERTRUDE NIESEN

ends our shapes"; and of the piece as a whole it is true to say that the biggest oranges are not in the front of

the stall. The piece improves. The high-water-mark comes in an uproariously funny scene in a liner, when gangster *Tomkins* and *Lupe* settle down in a cabin very rashly given to them by *Pettick*, although it contains the priceless document. Mr. HOWES and Mr. WATSON, as cat-burglars and then as ghosts, disport themselves in this cabin to magnificent effect. Mr. BOBBY HOWES for once is not rather frightened and on the defensive. He is not the funny man who is funny because of the unfortunate predicaments in which, in marked contrast to the security and comfort of the audience, his life consists. But he is a man slowly realising that he has all the best cards and is playing them with relish. His love-story with *Rita* (Miss DIANA CHURCHILL) is lightly sketched in. Miss CHURCHILL makes *Rita* a very attractive if rather unsophisticated girl for a man to pick up in a Cuban drinking haunt, and the sophistication is to be found in the two American undergraduettes who seem to have first claim to marry the hero.

The Chorus is a feature of this show, and the Cuban settings in particular are the occasion for some moments of striking colour effect through the series of very full but flexible dresses.

Between Cambridge (why call it Camelford and then talk so much about Caius?), Cuba, the liner and the stately home we see the world, and we see it in singularly varied and high-spirited company.

D. W.

Thud! Thud!

"While the Rector was away two swallows who must have mis-heard the 84th Psalm built their nest in the Altar Church Porch, when he returned, they fell dead in the pulpit."

Church Magazine.

"Egypt is the first overseas country to have apples from the new crop in Wenatchee Valley this year. Six car-loads are on their way to the Valley of the Nile. They are winter bananas, and will ripen during the voyage."—*Christian Science Monitor, Boston.*

Somebody seems to know best.

"It is a great thing for a man to have lived for 80 years, especially in the last 40 years," he told the *News Chronicle*.

News Chronicle.

Twice as good as we've been able to do, anyway.



—AND AMATEUR

Prunella Lockwood MISS BERTHA BELMORE
Bobby Lockwood MR. BOBBY HOWES
Pettick MR. WYLIE WATSON
Rita MISS DIANA CHURCHILL

A Patriotic Song

"The delegation considered that British pigs compare favourably with those seen abroad."

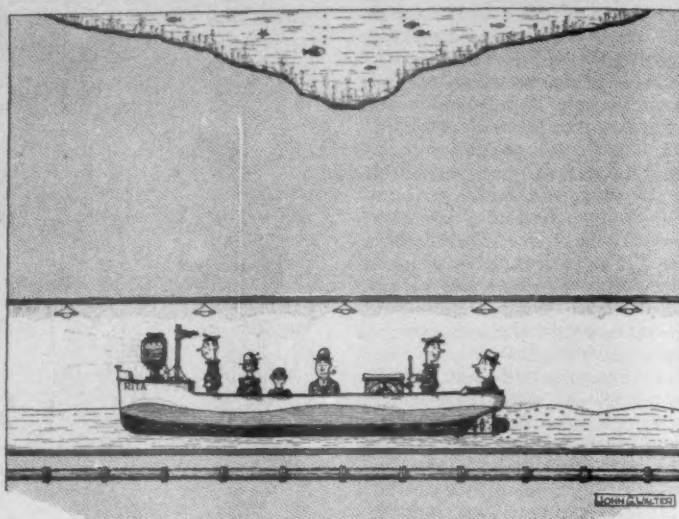
A song, a song of Britain.
She rode the seven seas
And scorned with spry and lordly eye
The battle and the breeze;
It may be, in a time of change,
She does not talk so big,
But she can show a worthy range
Of the domestic pig.

The noble sons of Britain.
A gallant race, though meek;
Delightful chaps, if not perhaps
Unequaled in physique;
But while there are, if men say true,
Rivals of larger breed,
Her hogs in the official view
Are very fine indeed.

The kindly heart of Britain.
Of lunatics the chief,
She lets the scum of Europe come
And squat on her Relief;
They sweat, and undersell, and drive
Her thousands to the dole,
But still her porkers seem to thrive
Quite nicely, on the whole.

Then sing the song of Britain.
Long may she gaze unawed
On miles of docks packed up with stocks
Of bacon from abroad.
And proudly may her bosom swell
As naturally it should,
For, though her farms may not do well,
Her hams are very good.

DUM-DUM.



"OH YES, SIR, THE FERRY AND SUBWAY COMPANIES AMALGAMATED SOME TIME AGO."

Debate at Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green

It was Miss Pin (hitherto distinguished only for accurate, and indeed elaborate, minute-keeping at practically every meeting ever held in Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green)—upon whom inspiration descended.

We were discussing, you will not be surprised to hear, new ways of raising

money, and Aunt Emma's idea of a Whist-drive and Dance could only be placed on a level, so far as originality went, with the Canon's suggestion of a Jumble Sale between now and Christmas.

"Why not," Miss Pin said modestly and yet firmly—"why not try an open debate?"

There was a rather stunned silence. Then Miss Dodge—obviously in order to gain time—said, "Why not, indeed?" and the Vicar said it seemed an excellent idea if anybody could be induced to speak one single word—and of course one had to agree that if they couldn't the idea *wouldn't* be so very good—in fact it would hardly be good at all.

Uncle Egbert supported Miss Pin with some interesting though perhaps rather long-drawn-out reminiscences of a Literary, Philharmonic, Ethical and Philosophical Society in the north of Flintshire to which he had once, many years ago, read a paper on Butterflies. And General Battlegate said that he'd undertake to argue any question to a finish with any man on earth, be he whom he might—and from one's knowledge of their mutual relations over a period of years it was pretty obvious that he had in mind the Admiral and their respective opinions concerning the way in which this country should be governed.

Then Miss Littlemug and the asthmatic Miss Dodge came into the open practically simultaneously and said



"WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE—SOMEBODY GET A FIXTURE-CARD!"

that a debate would make a change from a Sale of Work, and poor Miss Flagge agreed, adding that she really didn't feel able to start another woolrug for a couple of weeks at the very least.

So what with one thing and another Miss Pin's suggestion was carried.

"And what," said Laura, "shall we debate about?"

Naturally everybody looked at Miss Pin. But Miss Pin had shot her bolt, and it was left to the rest of us to try to settle what we should debate about.

Mrs. Battlegate said, "Nothing political, I beg," and one knew enough about home life at Dheera Dhooon to feel that her wishes should be respected.

Lady Flagge took up a rather strong line with the suggestion that somebody ought to propose that to Spare the Rod is to Spoil the Child, and it took Canon Pramm and Aunt Emma, backed by the Vicar, to make her see that it wasn't really the kind of topic to ensure a happy evening for all.

The Canon, unfortunately, was moved to add that in any case few people would be found to argue in favour of corporal punishment nowadays, and the name of Solomon was rather sharply bandied about for several minutes before we went on to hear a suggestion from young Cyril Pledge.

One knew of course that young Cyril Pledge is a great worry to his parents, and when he'd finished what he had to say about the way marriage is regarded in Russia and the Vicar had begged General Battlegate to remember that there were ladies present and had told the Admiral there was nothing to be gained by violence, and one had asked Charles to put his coat on again, Uncle Egbert took young Cyril Pledge to the door and told us about a fellow who'd had very much the same kind of ideas out in East Africa, and in the end he'd become a vegetarian and gone to live at Balham.

The meeting was then resumed, though not till old Lady Flagge had made capital out of the incident by saying that poor Mr. and Mrs. Pledge were neither more nor less than a living proof that Solomon knew what he was talking about, whatever anybody might say.

Miss Littlemug then rather suddenly announced that she had an idea. Couldn't we debate about something to do with Peace?

"You mean," said Miss Pin, "that we think Peace is a good thing?"

Miss Littlemug said naturally she meant that; surely there couldn't be two opinions about it—and one felt obliged to point out to her that a



"GO ON ABOUT MUMMY."

subject on which there couldn't be two opinions wasn't really a very promising one for a debate.

"That Woman's Place is the Home," said Mrs. Battlegate, suddenly and strongly.

It was practically impossible to guess whether the sound made at this by the General meant emphatic agreement or emphatic disagreement, but that it had some tremendous significance was unmistakable.

And Miss Dodge startled everybody by saying that in her opinion a true woman could very well earn her living at home, should circumstances require it, without going forth into the highways and hedges, though at the same

time she had always admired Florence Nightingale, whom she had at one time been thought to resemble.

Miss Plum supported her quietly but effectively with the simple words, "Barbols work and home-made scones and jams—always a demand."

The Vicar pointed out that it was growing late and many of us were due at the choir practice.

The meeting was adjourned.

And the last of it has not been heard yet by a very long way.

Many is the fireside where what we are to debate about is being energetically debated, and the results will doubtless be made known to you at no very distant date.

E. M. D.

Honoris Causa

"It's so nice that you are staying for the Graduation, Clara," said the Principal's wife to her sister, Mrs. Pinwhistle.

"Is it?" said Clara. "Why, what happens?"

The Principal's wife stood on tiptoe and regarded herself in the mirror over the mantelpiece. "I think my hat is just right this time," she said complacently. "That purple bird I had in it last year was too startling. What one should aim at is sober distinction—or perhaps distinguished sobriety sounds better. Well, dear, about the Graduation. Such interesting people are getting honorary degrees this time; and that reminds me, Clara, I want you to take charge of the General's wife. She may have red finger-nails, and I shouldn't like her to get entangled with the Doctor of Divinity."

Mrs. Pinwhistle looked confused.

"What have you got a General's wife for?" she inquired suspiciously. Being connected by marriage with the Indian Army, she found it hard to associate Generals with Graduations.

"She's coming to see her husband get his honorary LL.D., of course," explained the Principal's wife. "Though, as I said to Henry, I think it's a pity, because the students nearly always throw things at Generals. Some curious association of ideas, I suppose."

"My dear!" cried Clara, profoundly shocked. "Can't Henry stop them?"

"Oh, he looks every inch a Vice-Chancellor, and sends the beadle round to eject anyone he can catch; but the slightest thing sets them off again. Last year it was old Professor Cuttle's air-

cushion; it suddenly went flat and made a very loud noise like a pig."

"They ought to be in the army. A sergeant-major or two would soon—"

"Then there's Professor Mdivci," interrupted her sister, consulting a small piece of paper—"another LL.D. He's an Esthonian, you know, and a distinguished classical scholar. I've put you next to him at lunch," she added kindly.

"I hope he speaks something else besides Esthonian, then," said Clara ungratefully. "D'you think it would be any good trying Hindustani on him?"

"I asked Henry about language, and he said he should talk to him in Latin, although I'm sure I don't know how you can ask anyone to have some more Charlotte Russe in Latin. Now why," she went on, frowning at the scrap of paper, "have I written 'Speak to H. about D.D.'?"

"Perhaps it means the Doctor of Divinity, whatever that may be," suggested Clara.

"Oh, no; I remember. Speak to Higgins, the parlourmaid you know, about dogs' dinners. Last year we had a Bulgarian scientist who unexpectedly brought a large wolfhound as well as his wife, and it was really very awkward because it ate the Dean's mortarboard during lunch. I thought I'd make sure we had some bones this time, just in case anyone else brought anything like that."

"But about this General," said Mrs. Pinwhistle. "Surely it's very unusual for a General to work for a degree, isn't it? I never heard of one doing it before."

"My dear, those are *honorary* degrees!" cried her sister, dismayed by such ignorance. "Tokens of respect for

people's achievements in different spheres of—"

"Oh," said Mrs. Pinwhistle firmly. "But I must say I thought it was only students who got degrees. B.A.'s and things of that kind."

"Well, of course the students do. They come up in herds, and someone reads out their names in Latin, unless they happen to be called Lachlan or Karenhappuck, and then the Chancellor hits each one on the head with a mortarboard, and there they are."

"It sounds like a process in a streamlined factory," said Clara. "I'd rather watch a sheep-dipping any day."

At this point occurred a timely interruption in the shape of the Principal himself, who rocketed into the room with his arms full of academic trappings and an agitated expression.

"Sarah," he cried, "I can't find my hood!" And he flung the gay bundle despairingly at his wife's feet.

"Not find it? But look at all these hoods, Henry; it must be among them."

"How about this one?" asked Mrs. Pinwhistle, fishing out a handsome green silk object and dangling it enticingly before her brother-in-law.

"That? That's the Vladivostok LL.D. I got in 1927. I can't possibly wear that at our own Graduation."

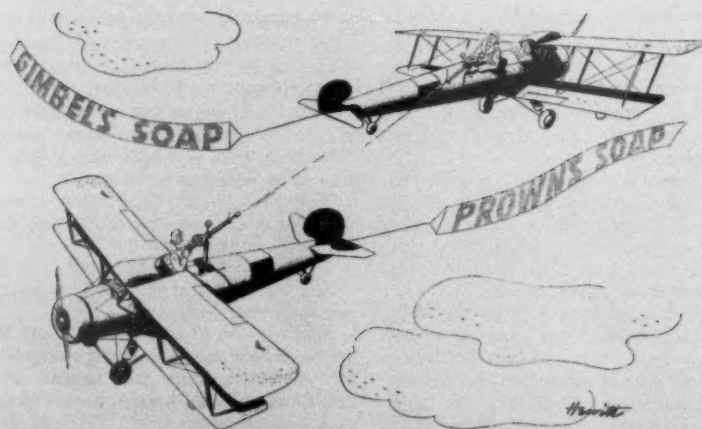
"Surely this is it?" said his wife, hooking up a blue and furry elegance.

"No, no; that's the one I got at that extraordinary place in America, where they gave young Potts a Ph.D. in landscape gardening. I told you how it would be, Sarah, when you let the children have them for charades at Christmas."

"Charades!" cried the Principal's wife. "Of course. Don't you remember Bernard wore it that evening when he was so good as Thomas à Becket and afterwards broke the chandelier in the hall? I'm afraid it must be in the charade-box, dear. What a pity it's so dusty in the attic!"

"Well, do be quick and get it, Sarah. I ought to be down at the Graduation Hall in ten minutes. Oh, and Sarah—I've just heard that Dr. Banjageree, the Siamese topologist, you know, is liable to make a kind of bleating noise when speaking. It's most unfortunate that he was asked to give the address; and I understand that it would be quite a simple sound to imitate. Really it is most awkward."

Mrs. Pinwhistle regarded her anxious relatives with sympathy. "If I were you," she said, "I wouldn't have any students in the University at all. They seem to be more trouble than they are worth."





"ITLER! WHAT THEY WANT TO DO WITH ITLER IS WHAT THEY DONE WITH NAPOLEON—PUT 'IM ON THE TOP OF A COLUMN IN TRAFALGAR SQUARE."

"Night Ops"

THE moon was a laggard;
The stars, very bright,
Were making the most
Of the crystal night,
When suddenly a new one,
A bold one, a rover,
Ran like a rutting stag
Half heaven over.

Jinking red
Through the Pleiades pale

He wreathed with rosebuds
Orion's mail,
Ribbioned with green
Ariadne's hair,
And tied three knots
In the tail of the Bear.

Never did Pegasus,
Wild with Spring,
Cut such capers
In heaven's high ring.
I thought Jove's thunderbolt
Wielded in wrath
Must strike the intruder's
Impious path;

And scarcely could believe
As he sped from view
I had merely been watching
A 'plane—and you.

More Glimpses of the Obvious

"If the patient faints when standing up,
he collapses on to the ground."
*Extracts from British Red Cross First-aid
Manual.*

"COST OF LIVING DOWN."
Heading in "Daily Mail."

That depends on *what* you're living
down.



"DEAR SIR, WE HAVE NOW HAD AN OPPORTUNITY OF TESTING YOUR INVENTION AND REGRET TO INFORM YOU THAT WE ARE NOT INTERESTED."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Temple for Solomon

IN spite of a style of rather hoydenish familiarity, *James I. of England* (JOSEPH, 15/-) undoubtedly conveys a sound estimate of a complex character and is full of good circumstantial detail. One may agree to differ from the jacket, which maintains that the opening years of the Jacobean era were glamorous and robust, for they were the unsavoury remains of a Renaissance that had overreached itself (if one may believe contemporary pamphleteers) long before the death of ELIZABETH. But the England of 1603 was a paradise to Scotland, and CLARA and HARDY STEENHOLM are right in depicting their hero as one of the happiest Scots that ever set foot on the high road to England. They see the British Solomon as the direct product of a Scots rearing compounded of terrorism and pedantry, and insist that the cowed child of MARY STUART, the erudite pupil of the ruffianly BUCHANAN, chose the only possible way of getting his own back on his world by concentrating on *welt-politik* and theology. They make nevertheless an adventurous story of his wooing of Danish ANNA, and are careful to enshrine such delightful comic relief as the postscript (on p. 426) from "STEENIE."

America Conquers England.

Mrs. EDITH WHARTON's posthumous novel is so far as it goes an enchanting though unequal example of her true form. *The Buccaneers* (APPLETON-CENTURY, 7/6) opens in America of the 'seventies with a charming bunch of debutantes who fall just short of belonging to what are now known as "the front families." This is hardly the fault of the young *St. Georges*, *Elmsworths* and *Clossons*. Even their unsatisfactory parents are doing their best; and the *St. Georges* have invested in an aristocratic Anglo-Italian governess who indirectly assists the marriage of *Conchita Closson* to her expupil, *Lord Richard Marable*. *Conchita* not only makes successful headway in England but a place in the sun for her Transatlantic bridesmaids, whose effect on the golden youth of London is the happy reverse of that hitherto produced on exclusive American hostesses. The finest scene of the book—a notable tribute to collective security—

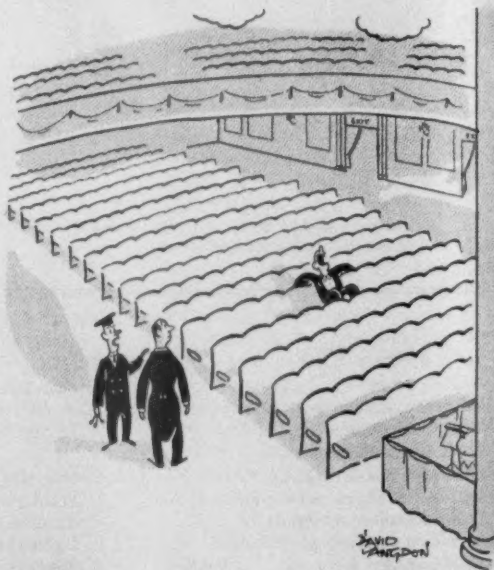
shows the girls closing their ranks to resist a common foe. The upshot, as sketched by Mrs. WHARTON and divulged by her literary executor, does not strike one as wholly satisfactory; but the *finis* written by death would obviously have been written far otherwise by the author.

Rumours of War

To those who do not take their pleasure in the study of economic statistics Dr. FRITZ STERNBERG's *Germany and a Lightning War* (FABER AND FABER, 12/6) may seem to be rather heavy going. Actually it is more than readable, though it will certainly depress readers who forget that questions of economics all have two sides and probably a good many more. That is to say, you have to be continually on your guard against being completely carried away by the author's convincing manner of marshalling his facts and making deductions from them. You have to be ready to marshal a few others which he has possibly overlooked and to draw other conclusions, and then you must be ready for someone else's facts and conclusions which will throw new light on the whole thing. The art of economics—it is surely an art rather than a science—is like that, particularly when it is concerned with war. The book expounds and supports the view that another world war and also another world crisis, each far worse than the last, are absolutely inevitable. The bright side of this grim picture is that no one can be quite sure when the things foretold are to happen. Like all good prophets Dr. STERNBERG avoids tying himself to future dates. His book was published on October 6th and it thus makes no mention of what occurred about a week before that date. Can it be that the war which was then averted was the war which he prophesies?

The Return of a Florentine Beauty

If there is any apology implied in Miss NAOMI ROYDE-SMITH's description of her latest book as an "escape" story,



"THAT'S WHAT COMES OF LAUGHING LAST—HE'LL KEEP US HERE FOR ANOTHER HOUR YET."



(A very vulgar subject indeed—so, if you are painfully genteel, you had better pass it over.)

Boys. "OH, AIN'T HE MOPS AND BROOMS, NEITHER!"

Baker. "WHY DON'T THEY TAKE HIM TO THE STATION?"

Tender Female. "HE'S ILL, POOR GENTLEMAN, HE SHOULD GO TO THE HOSPITAL!"

Cabby (contemptuously). "HILL! ORSEPITAL INDEED!—I ONY WISH I'D GOT AWF HIS COMPLAINT!"

John Leech, November 5th, 1859.

none is needed. To escape ever and again into the world of fantasy is an excellent and salutary thing. And fantasy it is, this "happier tale" which Miss ROYDE-SMITH was asked to write. Its time and its setting, it is true, are modern and conventional enough, and most of the people in it are just such pleasantly worldly folk as go winter-sporting. And very good comedy they make. But *Susan Adderley—The Younger Venus* (MACMILLAN, 7/6)—is different. Not that she is other-worldly to the point of making her friends uncomfortable. If she is prone to be silent and absent-minded while the others are chattering, if she has a taste for solitude (in marked contrast to her delightful sister, *Rita*), there is nothing *Mary Rose*-ish about her. She is a nice girl with a healthy taste for pretty frocks and *pâtisserie*. Her peculiarity is a startling resemblance to that real but

half-legendary SIMONETTA VESPUCCI whom BOTTICELLI painted; who, even after her death, as some think, was his constant model. *Anthony Frome* believes that, and has written a book on the matter. He has also taken the *Adderleys'* house while they are gallivanting abroad. He finds it subtly fragrant of *Susan-SIMONETTA*; and Miss ROYDE-SMITH's story, admirably contrived and written with great charm, is of the gradual forging of a bond between these two ere ever they have met in the flesh.

Port in a Storm

That there is a parallel to be drawn between the present unhappy conflict in Spain and the civil war which agitated Portugal just over a hundred years ago is certainly true.

For the War of the Two Brothers was also a struggle between the democratic and authoritarian principles, and one, moreover, in which theoretically neutral neighbours were careful not to let their right hands scrutinise too closely the part which their left hands were playing. But the book which Lieut.-Colonel C. P. HAWKES and Miss MARION SMITHES have written about it, and the former has embellished with some lively drawings, has no need of the adventitious recommendation of "news value." Based largely on the unpublished letters of Mrs. DOROTHY PROCTER, the *Siege-Lady* (DAVIES, 8/6) of the title and wife of one of those merchants whose admirable business it was (and still is) to keep this country furnished with the immortal wine of the Douro, it presents a vivid picture not only of the siege of Oporto, in which these benefactors were most immediately concerned, but of the whole war. It abounds in excellently imagined scenes and life-like portraiture—of that fine soldier SALDANHA, for instance, of the gallant CHARLES NAPIER, and of PEDRO himself, who renounced two thrones to establish his daughter on one, gave his country a generous constitution and died so appropriately in a room decorated with scenes from the life of *Don Quixote*. As for DOROTHY PROCTER, she seems to have been both attractive and courageous, carrying on under fire with gaiety and practical benevolence.

Mince-Spy

Those who in a few weeks' time will be jostling each other savagely at the library tables should bear in mind Mr. NICOLAS BENTLEY's *Game and Espionage* (CRESETT PRESS, 6/-), a good piece of nonsense which, though a "thriller," is a mock and a reproach to its fellows from beginning to end. It goes the whole hog of impudence and irresponsibility and sticks pin after pin into the absurd business of synthetic crime. What *Lord Peter* would say to it, Heaven knows, but something in Latin, no doubt. At stake is the rescue of Government plans, bearing on their margin nothing less than a Permanent Secretary's chess solution, from a *Dr. Schmutzig*, an alien at once daring and elusive, who leads his pursuers a dance beside which an eightsome would be snails'-play. Mr. BENTLEY, "who also drew the pictures," and as tellingly as ever, is inclined to lean too heavily on the verbal joke, but he can be very funny in words. One of the best things here is his description of opium-smoking in an ordinary pipe: "It was rather as if you were eating a piece of Dundee cake that turned to haddock as soon as you got it into your mouth."



KEEPING THE HOME FIRES BURNING.

The Novel Obstetrical

Miss ENID BAGNOLD has always been both original and versatile, and her new story, *The Squire* (HEINEMANN, 8/6), sustains her reputation. It is, to put it quite simply, the history of the birth of a fifth child to a woman, "*The Squire*," living in a comfortable small country house of some distinction but very much immersed in household and family cares. Her husband, who never appears in person, is in India, and new baby and recovered wife are ready to welcome him on the last page. It is a powerful book, vitally interesting, full of vivid living creatures, as, for instance, "*The Squire*" herself, the four elder children, the inspired midwife, to whom her work is a vocation, and *Pratt*, the unpleasant and yet not altogether dislikeable butler. The book is definitely a work of art and it will not only interest but enlighten some older readers, yet it will be a pity if it becomes the fare of those too inexperienced for the painless digestion of such strong meat.

In the Toils

Nicky Marlow, in *Cause for Alarm* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6), never had a moment's rest. Losing his job in England he went to Milan and promptly discovered that the business with which he had become connected had all too many questionable ramifications. In fact he was offered ample opportunities to increase his income, and a man (whose name of *Zaleshoff* scarcely did him credit) poured advice into his ears. Presently *Nicky*, who was not of the stuff from which heroes are usually made, got thoroughly entangled in a net

of intrigue, and with *Zaleshoff* to guide him made a precipitate bolt from Italy. Mr. ERIC AMBLER is conversant with contemporary European politics, and although the flow of his story suffers a slight check towards the close, it lacks neither keen observation nor exciting incident.

Mr. Punch on Tour

At Perth, from November 12th to December 10th, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern *Punch* Artists will be on view at the Art Gallery and Museum. The Exhibition will be shown later at Dundee, Dumfries, Kilmarnock and Blackburn.

Invitations to visit the Exhibition at any of these places will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, *Punch* Office, 10, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

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Charivaria

"THE waiter who serves me at lunch," says a business-man, "is a most interesting character. I often feel like asking him his history." He already knows, no doubt, about his arithmetic.

★ ★ ★

This Week's Beauty Hint

"BATH TO REVIVE OLDEN GLORIES,"
Daily Telegraph.

★ ★ ★

An explorer tells of an African tribe in which it is the custom to hand a poisoned cigarette to a criminal condemned to death. Inhale and farewell.

★ ★ ★

"What have we to offer the foreign traveller who badly needs a drink in this country after midnight?" asks an M.P. The answer appears to be a lemon.



★ ★ ★

A housewife complains that the modern maid eats twice as much as the pre-War one did. Still, she does her best to make up for it by staying only half as long.

★ ★ ★

A statistician points out that a passenger would have to fly fifty million miles to be certain of being killed in a British air-liner. But that, in our opinion, would be carrying patriotism a little too far.

★ ★ ★

Fifty golfers arrived in cars at a Hampshire village to attend a caddie's wedding. There was much good-humoured laughter when the bride sliced the cake.

★ ★ ★

"Constable —, who stopped defendant at Warrington following the complaints of two motorists, said he drove the car with the defendant as passenger to the police-station. The steering was a little tight, but he was able to steer a perfectly steady course."—*Liverpool Echo.*
That's right, blame your tools.

★ ★ ★

"As far as income-tax returns are concerned," says an official, "the average person just won't be bothered." Is this a promise?

VOL. CXCV



When a bus started to run backwards down a hill in Shropshire the driver calmly steered the vehicle until it arrived safely at the bottom. Meanwhile, we suppose, the conductor just as calmly reversed the destination boards.

★ ★ ★

"Three lantern lectures will be given, one by Mr. G. Stark, Head Postmaster of Worcester, entitled, 'I trip round the Post Office.'"—*Worcester Paper.*

With laughable slides.

★ ★ ★

Last week a diver raised an iron chest containing a number of skulls. Why bring that up?

★ ★ ★

The police report that so many counterfeiters have been rounded up that there are now very few false notes about. The Christmas Waits, however, will soon be with us.

★ ★ ★

"Nowadays," says *The Leader*, "surgeons can change the shape of a nose in a week and the patient feels nothing." Not even when he has to pay through it?

★ ★ ★

In a speech at his golf club the other day Lord HEWART said he thought it easier to be a good K.C. than a good golfer. This has started a rumour that COTTON is to take silk.

★ ★ ★

"Some skins are worth a small fortune," says a furrier. Look at the amount people paid to save them during the crisis.

★ ★ ★

"Britons crossed the seas to create new countries in new continents. The Brazilian Minister of Foreign Affairs presided, and many members of the Diplomatic Corps were present."—*Rhodesian Paper.*

To make sure of fair-play.

★ ★ ★

"Where can silent pictures be viewed these days?" asks a correspondent. Well, there's always the National Gallery.



U



AN APPOINTMENT FOR 3 P.M.

The Romance of a Plumber

Lucy Tells the Truth

DEAR GEORGE,—You will be surprised to hear that Lucy has told the truth. It happened like this. Last week I was deleting the front garden weeds when a sad faced fellow passed and said nice day, then he repassed and said yes its still me but when he repassed again I said hay why this back and fro hullo business? I am looking for Lucy he said. My dear Sir I said, being her husband I intend to have no snakes in my grass so go. Then Lucy came out and said why if it isnt my extinguished flame Alfred, fancy seeing you Alfred, how are you Alfred? William this is Alfred. Really indeed? I said. Come in do she said, we were going to have tea but it can wait.

So he came in and said alas my romantic nature has somewhat bunkered me. Still the Don Juan of Dulwich? Lucy said. No he said, this is the genuine factory fresh article, on holiday I met a girl who took a fancy to me and who I took a fancy to too, she is terrific. Has she tried skipping? Lucy said. No he said, I mean she is one hundred percent angel apart from no regulation wings.

We met on the pier he said, she came up and said the fortune machine had just told her she would meet a tall dark handsome fellow and wasnt it wonderful it had come true so quick and her name was Poppy and what was mine?

I needed a haircut he said, and was carrying a book so she naturally thought I was a bit of a highbrow and when I talked about the happy times me and the boys had she said ah your pupils and I didnt like to say I meant the dart club fellows, so she thinks me quite a M.A. Most girls have delusions re fellows Lucy said, thats why they wed them so why worry?

Ah he said, but when I said so long Poppy, back to the dear old school, she said this mustnt be a pro tem romance, you must write and I said Poppy I will often snatch a few minutes from nurturing the boys minds and do so. Of course he said, that shoved me up a gum tree as I can no more write a ten out of ten letter than fly, in fact I can only just write, so I thought rather than shatter her beautiful dream I would send her some poetry so I bought a book by this fellow Shakespeare containing little pieces called sonnets and I used to write Dear Poppy, then copy a sonnet and finish Respectfully yours Alfred.

All went well he said, until last week she wrote saying my poems werent bad for an amateur but what about sending one with a few more brass tacks in viz future plans and if my intentions are fairly honourable. I bet shes got the landing net all ready Lucy said. Lucy Lucy I said, if he wants to abandon the bachelors ocean for the connubial pond let him, proceed Alfred.

I tried doing a made to measure sonnet he said, but couldnt make a go of it and after five days Poppy wrote in very sarcastic handwriting saying thanks so much for your

letter so knowing Lucy had wed a fellow with the poetic touch I wondered if he could give me a hand as Poppy would faint copiously if she thought I was deceiving her, when we are amalgamated I can say I left teaching and took to night watching on account of brighter prospects.

What is your data for this sonnet? I said. Well he said, I thought of starting When I spotted you on the pier, I said to myself what have we here, And when you said what ho big boy, I all but jumped out of my shoes for joy. You must sprinkle some poetry about I said, viz twases and werts and oers and eres, come let us woo the muse together.

Well George I started with

O Poppy Poppy O but thou art It,
Twas on the pier thou scoredst with me a hit,

then he did a bit about wasnt it funny them both liking the same things and loudly in the old church tower and the future the wedding bell rings but we couldnt say it fast enough to make it fit in and we finished with

Write me soon and let me know
If thoull be mine in weal or woe,

but I said no Alfred, apart from erratic tumti tums I think it not quite up to the Shakespeare level yet although that is only my opinion, let us leave it be until to morrow. Poppy will break her heart if she doesnt hear soon he said. Or your neck Lucy said, oh revoor.

Next day he called and said I thought Poppy couldnt say boo to a gosling but I had a letter to day which proves she is an unscrupulous suchansuch, she says oh so thats what Im up to is it? leading her up the garden by writing poems re love etc and then when she asks me to be more definite shutting up like two dozen oysters so she says she is now going to make things hot for me and she doesnt mean meals. She says have I heard of breach of promise and how judges pile into unprintable nouns like me or will I pay cash down for the letters because if not its me for the high jump.

Are you worth much? Lucy said. Forty pounds he said, but I dont get that until I die and I dont feel inclined to die for a girl who in my opinion stands knee high to a worm. In despair he said, I went to the public library and asked the book keeper to tell me who this girl was Shakespeare did these pieces for and how it all panned out and he said now you are asking and I said yes of course and he said it is a baffling mystery such as experts have been trying to solve for centuries because the bard was a crafty old card and didnt commit himself by writing the ladys name, oh tell me do what shall I do? Tell her to go ahead Lucy said. Never he said, if it came out the shame would obliterate me as in my circle a fellow who writes poems to a girl is considered softer than fifty yards of thick plush.

Go and demand them I said. Ho yes he said, and her Father ex bruiser weight champ of the navy and bursting to stage a comeback, do not make me laugh. Leave her letter here Lucy said, I will try to think out an exit for you though I fear youre tied in a cloven hitch, if the worst befalls you must wed her and then join the navy.

Two nights later he called and said I am at my wits end and that doesnt get me anywhere, I am going to end it all by crossing a pedestrian crossing, fare you both well. Regarday Lucy said handing him a bundle. Why he said, these are those letters, how did you get same back? Well Lucy said, having considered every dodge to no avail I thought the only thing to do as things were desperate was to fall back on telling the truth so I just wrote to Poppy saying that the fellow who wrote those inflammatory poems had stopped living and that the authorities had copies of them and were

anxious to find out who they were written to, so Poppy returned them post haste and paid and said dont let them pin anything on me.

Well George it all proves the truth of what my Father always said viz in dealing with females do right and dont write but especially the latter. I hope you are well and am
Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Dont be so pugnacious in your letters George, its all okay for any country to sit on the fence so long as it keeps both legs over the right side.

The Wild Geese Are Coming

A MOMENT past there were four dogs surely, sending
Challenges from the compass points of the fields;
Now there are only two, sleepily contending
For evening's last word. The western glow yields,
Laggard, in soft waves of tone to the pressing night,
Down to the rim of the lamp-flecked hills.
A donkey brays, and, banked oafishly in flight,
A trail of curlew passes and shrills.

It is night now, and the noises are distant and harsh,
Off-key pin-points in a chant unabating
To the moon which lifts cloud-logged over the marsh.
A man kneels, waiting.

Hands numb on the barrels, shivering, but not with the cold,
He crouches, his mind quick in his ears!
Mind quartering the heavens, sifting sounds new from old—
The whicker of teal, a snipe's sudden fears,
Those dogs still, a train strident through night's shrouds,
The rush-splash of mallard, wiggon's "a-wheel!"
(There they go, black as crows against the moon-clouds!)
But not for them his mind's groping fingers feel.

Then suddenly out of the darkness tumbles a ball of sound;
Chatters, fat chatterings, swift to increase. . .
High yet . . . but they're coming lower . . . they're
circling round!
The geese!



"I'LL SAY THEY WEAR WELL; NOBODY'S EVER COME
BACK FOR A SECOND FAIR."

Novels Nipped in the Bud

THE LAZY J ranch—it belonged now to her, Angela Fordyce, a New York Society girl who had never before been west of Pittsburgh.

As the train pulled into Buzzard Gulch, Wyoming, she stood in the vestibule of the train carriage watching for Black Rafe, the ranch foreman, when suddenly a tall, lean, bronzed, long-legged, square-jawed, steady-eyed, broad-shouldered, clean-looking, blue-eyed, blond young cow-puncher leaped on to the train.

"Miss Fordyce—I know you must be Miss Fordyce on account of you're so beautiful," he began hurriedly—"I'm Whitey Todd, one of the Lazy J boys, and before you see Black Rafe I want to tell you that the ranch hasn't shown a cent profit for years—in fact it's lost money. But together you and me, fightin' side by side, can pull the Lazy J out of the hole if you're willin' to try."

The train stopped, and they were confronted by Black Rafe, a heavy-set, black-browed, black-moustached, black-eyed man in black clothes, with a sinister scar on his swarthy cheek. He sneered.

"Well, I see Whitey Todd's already had conversation with you, Miss Fordyce," he growled. "Now listen, Miss. The Lazy J's had a tough time for several years, but it ain't because I don't know my business—see? This year looks to be a good 'un, so if you'll just go back home and let me 'tend to things like I been doing for fifteen years now everything'll be fine and dandy."

The two men faced each other tensely. The air was charged with electricity. Black Rafe fingered the huge six-shooter in the holster on his hip. Whitey Todd fingered the equally huge six-shooter in the holster on his hip. Angela Fordyce fingered her time-table and started looking up the next train home. She didn't like the looks of the country around there, and besides Black Rafe was probably right. And anyway, if she didn't make a decision one way or the other pretty quickly it looked as though there might be some shooting, and Angela hated loud noises.

So she took the next train home, leaving Black Rafe with a free hand. He promptly threw Whitey Todd off the ranch and then went to work and made Angela a whopping profit of \$50,000 net for the year. The following spring Angela married some dude back East.

* * * * *

As the limousine rolled up the winding drive towards the towering gloomy château that was the home of his friend Andrew Snide, Frohman Farthingale, the famous amateur criminologist, sighed happily.

"This," he reminded himself, "is going to be a vacation. The last six times I've started out with the idea of taking a vacation I've found myself squarely in the middle of a murder case, but this time it's going to be different. This is to be a vacation."

As the car stopped before the great house the massive front-door opened and Andrew Snide's brother Casper stood in the doorway. His face was working strangely. He took one step and then with a hoarse cry pitched forward and tumbled down the steps. When the body finally came to a halt beside the limousine Casper Snide was quite obviously dead.

Frohman Farthingale glanced wearily out of the window and like a faithful old war-horse got out of the car and stooped beside the body. A cursory examination confirmed his worst fears.

"It's murder all right," he murmured to himself. Straight-

ening up he started to mount the steps toward the house to summon the many suspicious characters he knew he would find within.

Then he stopped in his tracks. A stubborn gleam appeared in Frohman Farthingale's eyes.

"No," he said firmly. "No, Sir. I said this was to be a vacation, and by God that's what it's going to be!"

Stepping over the body of Casper Snide he got back in the car and settled back in his seat. Grasping the speaking tube Frohman Farthingale spoke to his chauffeur.

"Drive on," he said.

* * * * *

Millicent faced Hubert Spigley with flaming eyes. She tore his engagement-ring from her finger and hurled it at him.

"I never want to see you again! Go!" she screamed.

Hubert, pale but unyielding, turned and strode to the door. There he paused.

"Very well," he said obstinately. "I'll go. I'll go to America. Then I'll go to Asia. Then I'll go to South America. Then I'll go to Africa. Then—"

He stopped suddenly and stood for a moment in deep thought. Then he walked back to her.

"No," he said, "on second thoughts I won't. If we have a foolish misunderstanding now we'll drag this thing out for years before we finally get together. So stop this nonsense and kiss me."

"Oh, Hubert!" breathed Millicent.

They clinched. A couple of weeks later they got married.

Modern Music

If music be the food of love,

Play on;

Gently as any sucking dove

That bubbles in the bough above,

Play me the soft euphonicon.

Play on, you flageolets and flutes;

Heave-ho, trombone;

Desist, you mufflers and you mutes;

Swing it, old oboe, and you lutes,

Intone.

Come, all you big bassoons, pipe down

The scale,

And you loud cymbals come and crown

The sounds the drummers drum and drown,

And the accordions exhale.

Do not for ever intersperse

The 'cello's wheeze

With chatter that is even worse—

Bright cheery chatter from a nurse

On cheese.

Oh, sing me songs of sentiment

Again—

Love lyrics from the Orient—

But not, no, not the nutriment

You say your cereals contain.

For vitamins I have no mood

Save one to scoff;

I say it though I know it's rude—

If music be the love of food,

Switch off.



THE CLOSING DOOR



"AND TAKE YOUR 'HANDS OFF THEM FINGER-PLATES,"

Letters from a Gunner

VII.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—The Army has very definite ideas upon one subject; the "other ranks" form a valuable reservoir of unskilled labour (as an economist would put it), and that reservoir was pretty well exhausted last Sunday. We had a day tidying up.

We paraded at nine in what was clearly about to become a persistent drizzle. With a little care I returned to my former status of height-taker and was told off with six others to check the various instruments we had recovered as part of the wrack, salvage or loot of our term of service, active. Previously we had three old instruments and one new one. Now we have two old and two new, one of the new having parted from the case for its stand. The case rather resembles the heavy drums of a symphony orchestra, and I fear that somewhere in Kent, Pancho and his Patagonian Swingsters have vastly improved their band. Our final report was that each instrument had lost its polish-

ing leather and linen cloths (for obvious reasons), one had lost both handles of its winding gear, and another in a miraculous way had lost the bubble out of its spirit-level. But we had gained one safety-razor (at the bottom of the box), a primer of shorthand (intermingled with an instruction-book), three letters to Bombardier Paddock, each in a separate and yet clearly feminine hand, and one squash-ball. How, when and by what means a squash-ball was able to manifest itself at any of the encampments I saw is quite beyond me.

But however manfully we strove, checking the instruments could not last all day, and towards noon we emerged very reluctantly on to the field of battle, reinforcements in aid of the gun crews, who were endeavouring to replace their guns somewhere near the practice positions they usually occupy.

I should explain that our dépôt lies off the main road, and the parade-ground slopes gently down to a little stream. At the top are an elderly drill-hall and some wooden sheds. At the bottom is the entrance to a side lane, and there stood six guns. The means of hauling them up were our two lorries,

each of which has a species of winch concealed in its interior. The field is of clay and has shed its covering of grass and absorbed vast quantities of water.

Before we arrived the morning sports had consisted of—

(a) Lorry No. 1 going to the bottom of the field and attempting to tow up the first gun.

(b) Lorry No. 2 going halfway down the field and endeavouring to pull up Lorry No. 1.

(c) Lorry No. 2 returning to the top of the field and endeavouring to tow up Lorry No. 1 with winch and wire rope.

(d) Lorry No. 2 being pulled off its concrete stand (owing to absence of chocks for the back wheels) into an embryo slough of despond.

(e) The whole battery making its way into the said slough to push out Lorry No. 2.

When we emerged it was to find Lorry No. 1, for whom immense quantities of brushwood had been collected, slowly disengaging itself from the mud. The driver, who in private life is chauffeur to an elderly lady with a 1921 Rolls, let in the clutch too quickly, there was a sickening series of reports from

the exhaust and the battery sergeant-major threw himself face down in the mud. I thought it showed immense presence of mind, for the noise was singularly like a machine-gun opening up, but he declares that he slipped. Then we adjourned for lunch. Half-an-hour after lunch both lorries had safely returned to the concrete at the top of the field, the position from which they had set out at nine o'clock that morning, while a hundred yards away the six guns also continued to occupy the positions they had taken up a week ago.

By this time tempers were getting a little frayed. The winch was called into action again, the wire rope taken down the field and attached to the tail-piece of one of the guns. As the guns are not perfectly balanced on the two wheels a number of stalwarts had to hang on to the muzzle end of the gun to keep the tail-piece out of the ground. Slowly the gun came up the field. As it neared the concrete it went over a bump and dislodged the men on the muzzle. The tail-piece dropped, caught the end of the concrete platform with an appalling crash and the gun swung round and thrust its muzzle through the side of one of the sheds.

The whole battery now bubbled with suggestions. It was perfectly simple to run them up with the winch. The winch would never do it. Better to haul them up diagonally. No lorry could get to the side of the field to do that. The men could pull each gun up on the rope. That was too dangerous. No, it was quite safe. The guns could be dismantled and taken up piecemeal. The guns could—well, stay where they were. Someone suggested that the sheds be taken down and erected around the guns at the bottom of the field. Boy Killey said the ground would dry out in the spring.

At that moment the Battery Commander appeared. He directed the lorries to leave the field by the top gate, drive down the side lane and tow the guns round by road.

Actually it took three-quarters of an hour by that method. Likewise another fifteen minutes to return two guns to the bottom of the field, when it was discovered that they did not belong to our battery at all and were awaiting collection that afternoon by another battery.

For that I received two shillings pay, two shillings ration money and two-pence for fares.

Boy Killey, I think, must be an earnest church-goer. After it was all over he stood at the top of the field and surveyed the scene. "Blimey," he said. "we've gone one better than them

blökes in the Bible. We've turned the perishing guns into ploughshares. All we want now is some seed potatoes and we'd be self-supporting."

Your loving son,
HAROLD.

Grown-Up Games

I FEAR I was not over hearty
At Mildred's party.
I am not very fleet
At handing lemons with my feet,
Especially when my attempts reveal
Vistas of undraped heel
That are not either mended
Or suspended.
I do not relish having to retire
To the next room without a fire
Solely to learn
On my return
Amid the Babel
If I am a vegetable,
And so to guess
From rare replies of "Yes"
And many shouts of "No"
That I am Greta Garbo's toé.
Of course I did not really care
That the dense people there
Thought that my efforts in the rhyming
game
Were tame,
Though I had just been moved to say
This was a busman's holiday.
But I did think it hard

That in the one charade
My sensitive portrayal of the tail
Of Jonah's whale,
Due to the sluggish pace
Of those who took the face,
Should fail to score
Through never coming through the
door.
Dash it! I wasn't even sent
To represent
My side in an official way
At Nuts-in-May.
Sardines was not at all the hit
I'd pictured it.
When I went off and hid
In an old refuse-bin (with lid),
Not only did my feet
Baulk me in my retreat,
But I was forced to sit aslant
The better to accommodate an aunt,
While all the rest,
Losing their zest,
Gave the chase up
For cider-cup.
And next, when I was praying
To have to do some slaying,
To take the aunt and smother her
With her skunk fur
Or strangle any of the girls
With their synthetic pearls,
I was denied my crime
By being the detective all the time,
And was so tired by two
It was as much as I could do
To take poor Mildred's hand
And shout that every minute had been
grand.



"THE JOY OF MODERN ART IS THAT IT NEVER STRIKES TWO PEOPLE THE SAME WAY."

I've Got The Gift.

"BUT dolling you can't be serious!"

"Certainly I'm serious," said the young man. "It seems obvious to me." As he spoke he slapped a great dollop of French mustard on to a fork's-load of *wiener schnitzel* and briskly consumed it.

"But—" The girl was dark and pretty, with eyebrows that might have been drawn with charcoal. She wore an upstanding dull-red hat with which, owing to her habit of bending forward over the table and looking up sideways at her companion, she kept nearly brushing the mustard-pots. "But dolling," she said earnestly, putting down her knife and fork. "Look, if you think that, why not do it yourself?"

"It'd be eccentric for me," said the young man, munching. "It just isn't our habit, that's all. But for all that it seems to me to stand to reason it's more—well, what you mean when you say *refined*."

"But dolling how absurd to talk about Americans being refined!"

"That isn't the point. And I don't mean Americans are refined. I mean that particular way of eating, it stands to reason, is—"

"Don't keep saying it *stands to reason* dolling it doesn't do anything of the sort. Why it's so silly to think the way Americans eat could possibly be better—"

"I don't say it's better. All I say is that their way of cutting everything up first and then eating it with the fork in the right hand," said the young man mildly, "seems on the face of it less—well, *crude* than our way. I don't say I want to adopt it, I simply say it's less crude. Can't you see it is?"

"No dolling I can not," the girl replied emphatically. "I think it's the most childish, finicky way of eating known. Why, it reminds me of that person Aldous Huxley or somebody once saw in a Corner House eating cherries with a knife and fork."

"That's exactly what I mean." The young man was unmoved. "If it seems finicky, there you are. It must be more what you'd call refined."

"You're quite wrong I wouldn't. Being finicky isn't the same thing as being refined—and why I keep using that word which I loathe—"

The young man pointed to her plate with a piece of roll and said "That's getting cold." She took up her knife and fork again, but almost at once put them down to bend forward and inquire—

"And how do you know all this about the way Americans eat anyhow?"

"Oh, films. And I've noticed them in restaurants and hotels, of course. In fact when there are Americans close to me I always—" the young man took a tremendous mouthful—"feel a bit self-conscious eating our way. I mean it's bound to look—well, sort of crude to them."

"Dolling you are absurd. What does it matter what they think? And of course our way is better. It's so much more *sensible*. Why, cutting everything up first—and that reminds me, you know that film?"

"Which film would that be?" the young man said cautiously, but still eating with undiminished gusto.

"The Dietrich one where they made the mistakes."

"What mistakes?"

"Dolling don't be maddening, you know perfectly well. The butler knocked at the door and it was supposed to be in England."

"The door?"

"And the butler. The whole story was laid in England. There were simply lashings of Good Taste, and Herbert Marshall was in it, but they went and made the butler knock at the door."

"I wouldn't know about butlers," said the young man. "I'm a Communist, you seem to forget that."

"Dolling I do wish you wouldn't drag your politics into important things. Anyway, the butler wasn't the mistake I meant, it was the meat."

"What meat?"

"Veal," the girl said, as if that explained everything.

"The idea was you see that he—it was Melvyn Douglas—"

"You said it was Herbert Marshall."

"So it was, but *this* was Melvyn Douglas, and the idea was that he didn't touch his meat at all, it was only because he was dismayed about something, but the butler—"

"Herbert Marshall?"

"Of course not—the butler thought it must be because he didn't like veal. And they showed you the plate of veal, there it was all cut up neatly into little squares, but it was supposed to be in *England*!"

"With the door and the butler," the young man nodded.

"And Herbert Marshall. And Mervyn Douglas. Tell me," he added, chasing a small disc of carrot round his plate, "would all this have anything to do with the subject under discussion, or am I just an old fusspot?"

"Dolling there are times when you exasperate me, of course it has it's an example. It just shows how absurd Americans are, thinking that English people would go through all that ridiculous business of cutting everything up first. It's exactly what you said to begin with."

"I don't remember saying that to begin with."

"Oh but dolling you did definitely. I swear you did dolling. You mustn't mind admitting it when I beat you in an argument, you know," she smiled charmingly, "I've got the gift. Everybody says I've got a quick brain."

"I'd noticed that," the young man said.

R. M.

Queer Cards

DURING the week Monday, November 14, to Friday, 18th, an Exhibition of old and curious Playing Cards from many countries is being held at Messrs. WILLIAM WHITELEY'S, Queen's Road, Bayswater. The Exhibition, which will be opened every afternoon at three o'clock by various stage celebrities, is in aid of Charing Cross Hospital, and Mr. Punch hopes that many of his readers will take the chance of helping an excellent cause in so pleasant a way. The Exhibition can be seen at any time from 9 A.M. to 6 P.M. (Monday, 3 P.M. to 6 P.M.)

"Redcar Council was criticised at an open-air meeting held in the town-hall last night . . ."—*Northern Paper*.

For not repairing the roof?

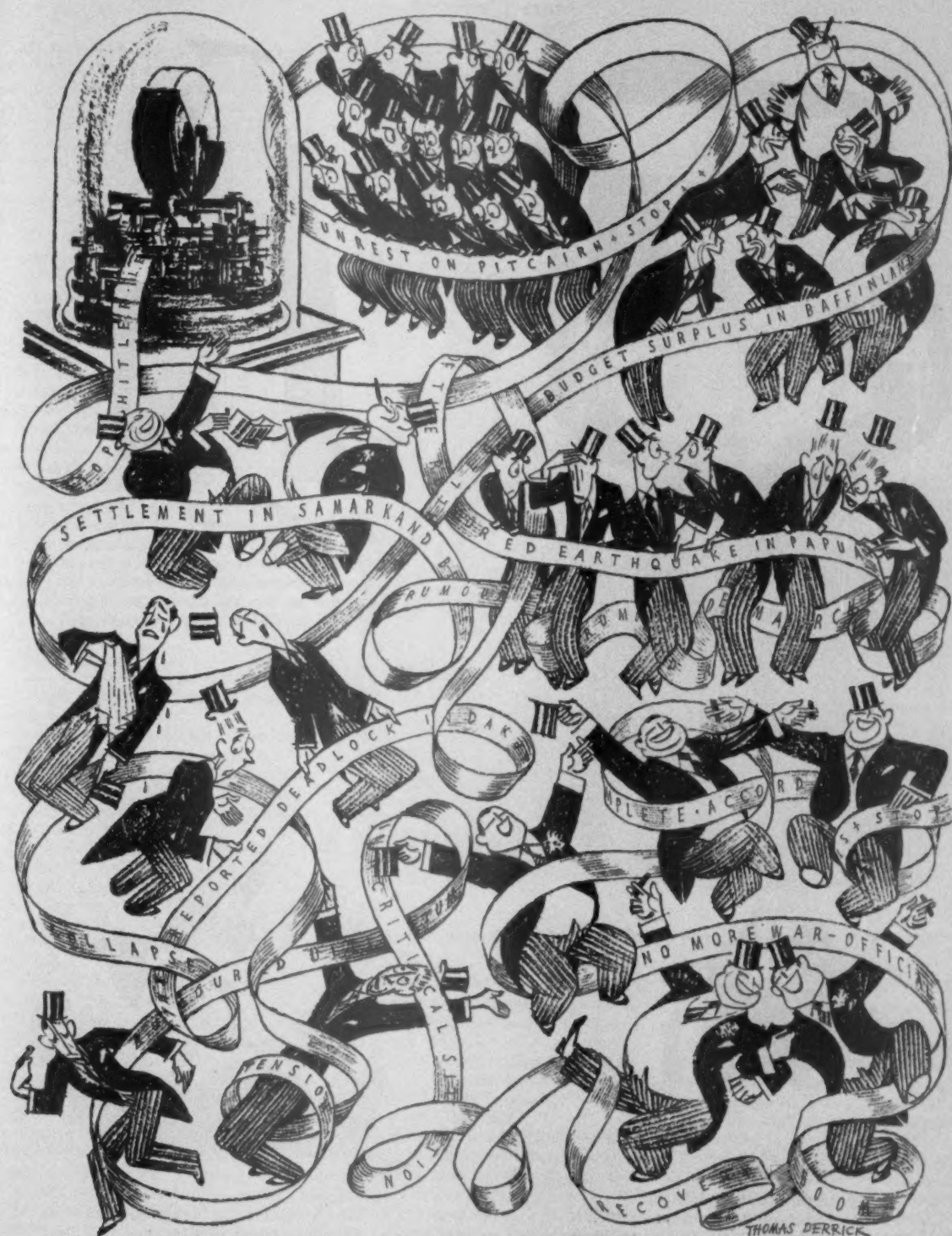
"I hasten to add that any contract placed anywhere in Scotland, though preferably in the distressed areas, would be helping to keep Scots alive. An obvious but necessary task! SURPRISED RATEPAYER."—*Evening Paper*.

Nothing surprises us.

"Plan of the new hotel which will be built in Glasgow. The section on left of plan will turn round the corner into Argyle Street while the main frontage is in Union Street."

Picture-caption in Scottish Paper.

How many times a day?



SENTIMENT ON THE STOCK EXCHANGE

More Clerihews



It was a weakness of Voltaire's
To forget to say his prayers,
And one which to his shame
He never overcame.



Archbishop Laud
Saw nothing to admire in *Maud*,
The line he thought most appalling
Was "Little King Charles is snarling."



Somebody sent Dean Swift
An ounce of strychnine as a gift.
He took about thirty-five minims
While writing about the Houyhnhms.



Brigham Young
Was exceptionally highly-strung.
He always used a chopper
When a Mormon said anything improper.
E. C. B.

Guys

To one with my own deep-seated respect for the majesty of the law there can be few more awful spectacles than a policeman tearing down a street with his trousers on fire, pursued by a yelling deliriously happy mob of East End children. Yet this very sight did I see only a few years ago not many hundred yards from Mile End Gate, and since then I have always visited the East End on Guy Fawkes night. Not to exult, of course, in a possible repetition of the spectacle, but in the hope that should it happen I would be able to render assistance to the harassed constable.

There is a law, I believe, against lighting fires in the middle of a public street. On the face of it such a law appears sensible, and in the East End they obey it decorously on 364 nights in the year. But on November 5th as soon as darkness falls children can be seen creeping from their houses with bundles of wood and other combustible rubbish in their arms. They have been quietly collecting it for weeks, driving tradesmen to distraction by asking for old boxes and lumps of cardboard. Occasionally as they creep forth some of them meet a patrolling policeman.

"Are you going to light a fire?" he says sternly.

"No," they reply.

"You'd better not," he says, "we've had strict orders this year to prevent such goings-on."

The boy returns into his house and waits until the policeman has gone and then comes out again and builds his fire. Other sinister figures issue forth, and presently somebody lights a firework and throws it on the pile.

Next time he comes along, if he is old and wise, the policeman passes quietly by on the other side, appearing not to notice the fire. If he is young he attempts to find the ringleader and arrest him, which is done something like this:—

"Who lighted this fire?"

Chorus. "Bill Adams, Sir."

"Where does he live?"

Chorus. "He ain't got no 'ome."

The policeman then rushes forward, determined to effect an arrest, but he is blinded by the fire and the children escape to the next street, where they join the crowd round another fire.

Exactly how the policeman set his trousers on fire in '32 (or was it '33?) has never been satisfactorily cleared up, though it is said locally that a Royal Commission is sitting, which is more (as they say with their simple coarseness) than the policeman was able to



"I WONDER WHY THE BARLOWS ARE HERE. SHE DOESN'T LIKE MOZART EITHER."

do for many weeks. Several boys claim to have inserted a Roman-candle in his pocket, but probably it was brought about through a boy with a pole giving him a gentle poke in the middle as he stood with his back to the fire reading an impromptu Riot Act.

Some Borough Councils send out the Fire Brigade to put out these fires, but this is considered hardly playing the game. It is rather like using poison-gas in a frontier engagement. The Borough Councils argue that the fires have sometimes resulted in damage to property, but the locals reply that most of the

said property ought to have been pulled down years ago anyway.

East London is not so drab as it is painted at any time, but on November 5th, with every side-street glowing in the red blaze of a fire, it presents a remarkable and of course deplorable picture.

Poor Guy Fawkes himself might well complain that he is now seldom burned on his own day. This year I understood that the most popular figures were to be Hitler, Mussolini, Mr. Chamberlain and (if my informant had the name right) Deaf Cooper.

Word-Skirmish

Happy Metaphors (Monthly Medal)

"The working-classes . . . are unwilling to shoulder all the kinks of patriotism while the relieved opponents of the Front Populaire make off with the halfpence."—*Manchester Paper*.

The Unilateral Triangle

"Below on the floor of the House Winston Churchill and Anthony Eden formed a triangle which centred on the Prime Minister."—*Canadian Paper*.

Advertisement (First Prize)

"The name McDermott has always been symbolic of the ultimate in Funeral Direction in Santa Barbara. May we offer our personalized service?"

Lovely De-Words

"Mr. Reade said he appreciated the action of the Committee in trying to de-uglify these Council houses."—*Dorset Paper*.

"Canon Porters of Sydney will give an address on dephlegmatizing the Union."—*L.N.U., South Australian Branch*.

"In her summary of the School's work Miss R—— K—— insisted that deproletarianization of the land worker was necessary."—*Church Times*.

But a Birmingham warrior (to whom goes a Blue Star) tells me that he is an antideproletarianizationist.

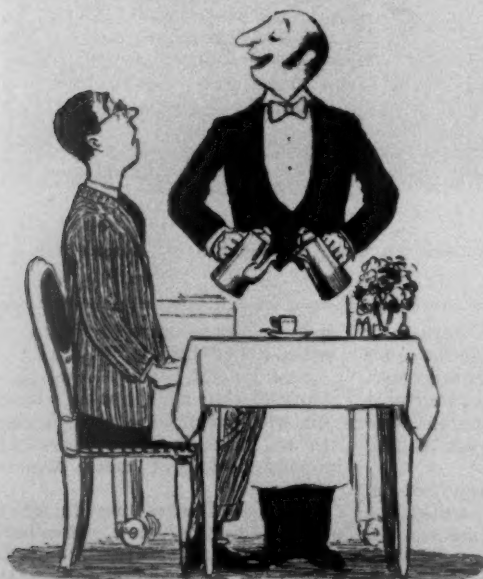
Beautiful Ize-Words

"The exploitation of the diamond reefs and gold mines of South Africa were to be sequeled by the Jameson Raid and the Boer War."—*Literary Paper*.

"This change of approach . . . is typical of modern youth's disgust at the march of shibbolethization."—*London Mercury*.

"Vacationize Your Car"

Advertisement—"Times of Ceylon."



Brian Roth

"BLACK, WHITE, OR COFFEE-COLOURED?"

"D—— and S——
For Permanizing Posters" Advertisement.

"Old Trafford, you remember, is unstadiumized."

Cricket Writer.

Captivating Age-Words

"BULK POWER OUTAGE"

New Zealand Paper.

What does "outage" mean? We will give you three guesses. We thought at first that it signified the "output" of electric power. But the outage, it appears, was caused by an exceptional electric storm:—

"There were further short interruptions in the Tuai supply this morning, but these did not cause extensive inconvenience, as did last night's lengthy outage."

We gather from this that the lights went out, or rather the power went off. Should not the word be "offage"?

"DELIGHTFUL RAMBLAGE"

Advertisement of Glen Wyllie.

"6d. is charged for LOANAGE"

"Total spindleage of over 3 million"

Business English (November Medals)

- (1) "We needing these, please urge the goods to us at your earliest."
- (2) "I have diarized the event forward to the 16th prox."
- (3) "We . . . have pleasure in enclosing herewith your account for week ended 17th June . . . and we ask you to accept our apologies for the delay in rendition."
- (4) "Particular care should be taken in the sortation of mail for these offices . . ."—*Post Office Notice*.

And, by the way, in the writation of the letters.

Odd Lots

"Right aft, against the transom, is the fuel tank and rudder compartment, capacitating 150 gallons."—*Yachting World*.

"This seems, at best, a dubitative point."

Letter to "Hampstead Express."

"The neglection of these much used roads . . ."

Letter to "The Times."

And here is a grand new word:—

"Airdraulic struts."—*From an article on a new aeroplane*.

It is a pity, as we think we have said before, that people who despise "the dead languages" should take it upon themselves to construct new words from odd bits of Greek and Latin. If I were so foolish as to make a "strut" out of brown paper and tarred string I should ask an expert whether it was likely to be a sound strut before I used it. Why don't the motor-world and air-world buy an *Oxford English Dictionary* and employ somebody to vet their new words before they let them loose?

"Airdraulic," Bobby, is worse than "airdrome." For drome, at least, is a single root, but "draulic" is one-and-a-half. Hydraulic, as you know, comes of course, from ὕδωρ (water) and αἰλός (pipe). In Greek, I see, ὑδραυλικὸν ὄργανον denoted "a kind of musical instrument played by means of water." The Latins extended it to other kinds of water-engine. However, no more of that. The point is that "draulic" means nothing at all. One might as well tie a sparking-plug to a magneto and use it as a carburettor. If this delightful new strut is fitted with pipes or slots or what-nots through which air passes it might be called an "aeraulic," I suppose. But "airdraulic"?—please, no.

Game, Set and Match

"And what about all those disequibrious households whose partners stick to their individual styles?"—*London Paper*.

A. P. H.

"L"

"No, dear, you may say what you like but I think it's very brave of you to trust yourself to me. After all, I'm still an 'L,' ha-ha-ha! Not that I want you to think that I'm in the least nervous, because I'm not. At first, I admit, I never took my eyes off the road for a moment, but now I just tootle along and never give it a thought. Not that I believe in speeding."

"I'm glad you don't believe in speeding, Miss Little-mug, especially just here, because we're in a thirty-mile limit."

"Fancy, and I never noticed it! That just shows you, doesn't it? that I'm really quite at home at the wheel. It's a funny thing, but I'm so often reminded of Robert Browning when I drive."

"Robert Browning?"

"The poet, dear."

"Wasn't he rather before the time of cars, though?"

"That's just it. A car would have made the whole difference to that time when he and his friends rode to Aix—you remember how they sprang to the stirrup, and Joris and he? I've always wondered what the name really was of the one called *he*. I daresay, dear, you're thinking how fanciful I am?"

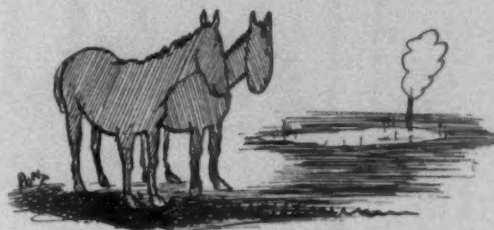
"I was really thinking—"

"Don't tell me, dear! We'll see if I can't guess. I had quite a little reputation for thought-reading as a girl. We used to do it in the evenings after dinner sometimes, and I always read my dear mother's mind like an open book; and sometimes my father's too, but one didn't always quite feel like putting his into words."

"Don't you think we ought to have turned off just here?"

"Very likely. Still, I don't want to have to turn round. See what the map says, dear. It's there—under the sandwiches and my book and the parcels."

"The map says we should have turned left at the cross-roads."



"COME ALONG AND HAVE A DRINK."

"How tiresome of it! Just ask that old man, dear, to make sure. I'm afraid I've rather shot past him, but he seems to me to be *crawling* instead of walking. Would this be Evesham, dear? I saw it written up."

"Then I think it would be."

"Now I do wonder if this is the place where the *Battle* of Evesham was fought. Or wouldn't it be? I should almost think it must have been, because it would be almost *too* much of a coincidence if any other battle was called the Battle of Evesham, wouldn't it? What did the old man say, dear?"

"That he's a stranger here."

"Then he ought to be in his own home at his age. Perhaps we shall see a policeman later on. Another thing about that poem of Browning's was that they never had to stop and ask the way. Simply tore on and on, treating their horses in that disgraceful way. You remember that two out of the three dropped down dead and the third one had a bottle of wine poured down its throat."

"You could turn here, Miss Little-mug."

"Yes, dear, I suppose I could. The one thing I never *can* remember is where reverse is . . . No, *that* wasn't it, was it? How lucky there wasn't anything right in front of us! Don't mind my chatter, dear; it's a form of nervousness, I always think."

"Shall I—?"

"No, dear, just sit still. These gears are . . . so extraordinary. . . . There now, did you hear that noise? There *must* be something wrong with the gears when they make a noise like that. Still, we're *round*, aren't we? The smell goes off after a bit. I always think it must be the brakes. I'll just open— No, dear, it's quite all right; I only need one hand for the window and one for the— All right, dear, it was only a scrape—we barely touched it, I think. Now then, we must go like the wind."

"I don't think we'd better go like the wind, Miss Little-mug, right through Evesham."

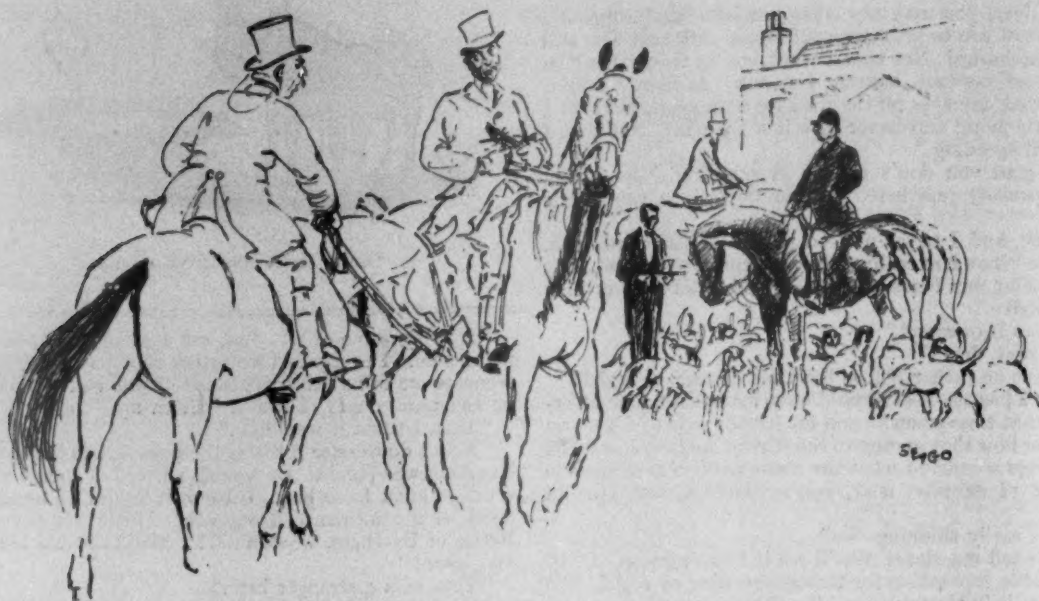
"Quite right, dear, to remind me. Evesham looks well whichever way one goes through it, doesn't it? I always think it's funny what a lot of ways there are of getting *into* a town, and of course an equal number of ways of getting *out* of it. What were we talking about—was it Browning?"

"Yes, but perhaps we'd better think about the way just for the moment."

"Yes, indeed. So glad you reminded me. One thing I do hope when I take my test—that the man won't ask me a number of questions. I'm perfectly willing to *drive* here, there and everywhere, but the whole secret is *concentration*, as I always say. And what's more, I shall tell the man so."

E. M. D.





"LANGUAGE, SIR? WHY, COMPARED TO THE OLD MASTER HE'S ONLY A LEARNER."

The Club Secretary's Creed

I PROMISE to be a good secretary.

I promise to agree with the Chairman, whether he agrees with the Committees, the Members, or not.

I promise to agree with each Chairman and every member of the—

House Committee	
Billiards	"
Wine	"
Card	"
Kitchen	"
Sports	"

I promise to agree with every member having a complaint against any of the above Committees.

I promise to agree with every Committee member or other member who knows how badly the Club is run and who should run it.

I promise to agree with all the members who say that the food is the worst anywhere.

I promise to agree with the Steward regarding—

All Committees
All Members
All Staff
The Chef
The Housekeeper
His salary
His accommodation.

I promise to agree with the Chef regarding—

The Kitchen Committee
All Members
The Steward
The Housekeeper
The Tradesmen
The equipment
His salary.

I promise to agree with the Housekeeper regarding—

The House Committee
The Members
The "young hussies you get as maids these days"
The Steward
The Chef
Her accommodation
Her salary.

I promise to agree with myself that I cannot entirely agree with the foregoing, but it is nice to get it off my chest.

Name This Child

MUCH we debated what to call the baby;
Marjory was turned down, and then *Elaine*;
Estelle was thought a bit fantastic maybe,
Deborah too severe and *Jane* too plain.

Sheer waste of time; we might have let the thing go.
 Where are those names which we discussed so long?
 No one now calls her anything but *Bingo*,
 Except a few of us who call her *Bong*. A. W. B.



ANDERSON AND THE LION

"It's all done by Kindness."

Impressions of Parliament

Tuesday, November 1st.—To some extent the wisdom of the Munich Agreement was still in dispute when both Houses re-assembled this afternoon, but Members were far more concerned to discover the best methods of accelerating rearmament and A.R.P.

The debate in the Lords was opened by Lord STRABOLGI, asking for an independent inquiry into the state of national defence, and Lord SWINTON followed with a plea for a Ministry of Supply and a national register. But Lord ZETLAND, who replied, turned down all three suggestions. Subsequent speakers found his attitude somewhat complacent.

At Question-time in the Commons Mr. GEOFFREY LLOYD was able to tell the House that recruiting for A.R.P. had now passed the million mark. In a brief statement Mr. MACDONALD described the measures which were being taken to bring Palestine under control, and he hoped shortly to publish the Woodhead Report. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN announced that the Government proposed to put the Anglo-Italian Agreement into operation as soon as possible, a proceeding due for debate next day; and, after Mr. QUINTIN HOGG, fresh from victory at Oxford, had been riotously welcomed, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, Mr. ATTLEE and Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR paid most genuine tributes to the late Lord STANLEY, whom the House will greatly miss.

Since settlement by negotiation has always been a basic Socialist principle, there is not a lot for the Socialist party to say just now, particularly as the supposed wrong done to the Sudeten Germans at Versailles is a grouse of which it once made much and the rearmament for which it now clamours was vigorously obstructed by it until a short time ago. On the adjournment Mr. ATTLEE sadly described the International Commission in Czecho-Slovakia as a body for registering Herr HITLER's demands. He was very dubious about the British guarantee to that country, and as the only remedy for the Colonial problem he gave the cutting-out of the British imperial

frame of mind. Could nothing more be done, he asked, for refugees?

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN began with a flat denial of *The Daily Herald's* report that expenditure on social services was

defeated and decadent. The ten million pounds already advanced to Prague was primarily for the help of refugees; until the Czech minorities question had been settled he would be unable to

define more clearly the British guarantee. There would of course be trade competition with Germany in Central Europe, but he foresaw no need for economic warfare. Sir JOHN ANDERSON, the new Lord Privy Seal, was to be Minister of Civilian Defence with direct charge of A.R.P. and also of arrangements for national voluntary service. The suggested Ministry of Supply Mr. CHAMBERLAIN rejected as ineffective without powers of compulsion which he still believed to be unnecessary, and he reminded critics that we were only in the third year of a five-year rearmament programme. Britain had no aggressive intentions against Germany or any other country, but was making herself strong again only that her diplomacy might operate on equal terms. He wound up with the hope that he himself would yet see the first stages of general disarmament by agreement.

If there is a shred of sanity left in the world, he may.

Not a great deal more was said. Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR declaimed about the P.M.'s policy of scuttle and defeatism; Mr. BOOTHBY was convinced that only a terrific effort of rearmament could save the Empire, which the House had no mandate to give away; Mr. OSWALD LEWIS (Conservative) saw no chance of friendly relations with Germany until we gave her the equivalent of what had been taken from her at the end of the War; Mr. MCGOVERN, one of Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's new I.L.P. supporters, held that it was the refusal to modify the frontiers fixed at Versailles which had created HITLER. Later in the debate Mr. OLIVER STANLEY said that, keen as he was on a trade agreement with America, one which only increased the present disparity in the trade balance between the two countries would benefit neither.

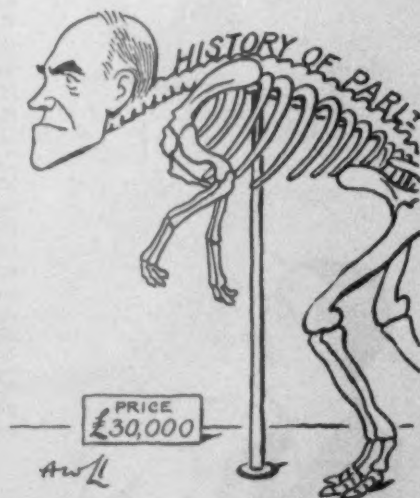
Wednesday, November 2nd.—By the end of the debate on Lord STRABOLGI's motion the Lords had declared themselves very strongly for a compulsory national register, to be put in train immediately, and in favour, though there was less agreement about it, of a Ministry



THE NEW BOY

Lord HALSBAM (to Mr. QUINTIN HOGG). "GOOD LUCK, MY BOY. I'M SURE YOU'LL BE A CREDIT TO THE OLD HOUSE."

about to be reduced, and added a word of rebuke for those who were going about describing this country as



"This is a reconstruction from fossil bones on an immense scale."—Col. Wedgwood in the Introduction to the second volume of the "History of Parliament."



"EXCUSE ME, SIR, BUT I THINK YOU HAVE GOT MY BEARD."

of Supply. About Lord STRABOLGI's suggestion of an inquiry into national defence, nobody but himself was keen.

There were many speakers. Had the Government learned the lessons of the crisis? Did they realise that the people expected to have something to do now and were only waiting for a lead? Could we afford to waste good time? These were some of their questions, in reply to which the new First Lord, Lord STANHOPE, held firmly to the Government's decision that the present rate of supply was too satisfactory to justify a dislocation of industry and that a compulsory register would not be of much value, as to check the qualifications which were claimed would be very difficult.

The Italian debate, which, as the P.M. pointed out, was not on the merits of the Anglo-Italian Agreement but on whether this was the right time for putting it into force, panned out as one expected—that is to say, Mr. CHAMBERLAIN was warmly supported by nearly all the Conservative Back-Benchers who spoke, the Opposition painted British Mediterranean diplomacy in the shabbiest possible colours, and Mr. EDEN remained unhappy about the whole business.

His speech, moderate and much the most effective on the other side, took a

perfectly intelligible line. The British policy of appeasement seemed to mean that Britain was always giving, the dictator States were always taking; the Italians had consistently broken their pledged word in the Non-Intervention

Agreement, and were still breaking it; they had recalled ten thousand troops but had left a large air force, which was General FRANCO's chief hope.

To this argument there could be only one answer, which Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had already given, and which Mr. BUTLER reinforced when he wound up, that Spain had ceased to be a menace to the general peace and that the beginning of a better understanding in the Mediterranean was a more practical policy than what the P.M. called the "eternal tendency to suspicion." HITLER and MUSSOLINI meant it when they denied territorial ambitions in Spain. (Whether they do or not, it would be a mistake to forget that even NAPOLEON fell down handsomely in Spain owing to his ignorance of the savage resentment of the Spanish people towards foreign interference.—*Mr. P.'s R.*)

As Mr. EDEN said, it was a question of opinion. On the division Mr. CHAMBERLAIN got a majority of two hundred and seven votes.



MR. EDEN EXPRESSES SOME DOUBTS AS TO THE STABILITY OF THE NEW STRONGHOLD.

An Impending Apology

"He was pleased to learn that Mr. Eady had accepted the Presidency, he added, and assured the members that they would find he was no 'ornament.'"

Shipley (Yorks) Times and Express.

This Beauty Business

THE assistant was very comforting. "Oh, no, Moddom," she said, "not nowadays. I mean, no one's face is really her own face nowadays, I mean—is it, really?"

Humbly I agreed.

"No one need despair," she went on kindly. "The best way is to decide what one's type is, if you see what I mean, and then adapt oneself as it were. Now with the sporting open-air type, for instance, the hair should sweep back as though Nature had held the brush, if you understand me? And varnish should be colourless."

"Hair varnish?" I asked casually, surprised by nothing.

"No, for the nails *actually*, Moddom. For ladies of more exotic style it is best to wave the hair back above the ears and delicately to arch the eyebrows. Or if Moddom is gay and what I call *carefree*, then the hair should hang in soft curls, the lip-stick should be brilliant and provocative, the eyes—"

"Quite," I said.

"So simple, Moddom. As I men-

tioned, one has only to make up one's mind what kind of face one wishes to have, I mean."

I looked in the glass. We were both silent.

"And what," I asked at last, "do you recommend for me?"

She flushed. "Well, of course it's a little hard for me to say," she stammered, "without knowing Moddom's tastes. Your hands, now. Moddom is fond of gardening, or of cleaning her car, or of tarring fences?"

"No, I live in a flat in London and have no car."

"Oh, I see. You have your own business. I mean to say, Moddom would like a *chic tout ensemble*, so to speak. Nothing aggressively feminine, yet subtly distinguished, if you see what I mean."

"You put it beautifully. But I don't run a business."

"Of course not. I should have known. Moddom runs her home, and runs it perfectly. She is a brilliant hostess—the glamorous, languorous type. Naturally."

"Well, no. I'm not exactly a home-runner. As a matter of fact I write."

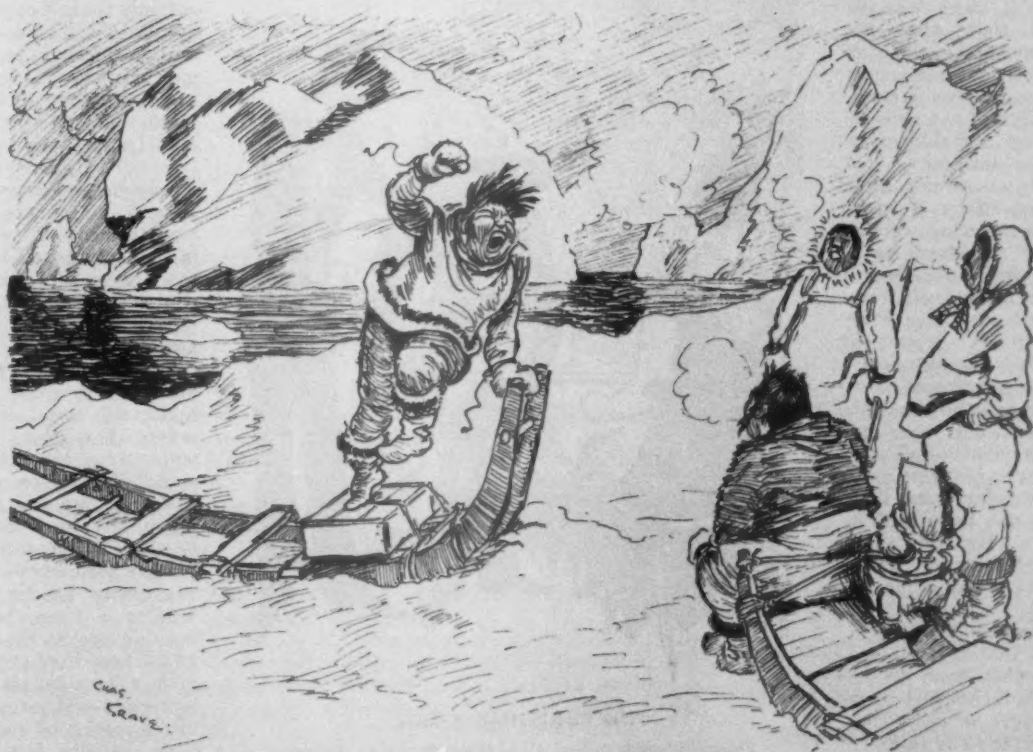
"Oh," said the assistant blankly. There was a nasty pause. "I'm afraid I must confess," she said at last, "that we haven't been consulted by many ladies of your profession. No, not many. I think we shall have to create a type for you."

"Perhaps," I said, "that would be best."

Again we studied in silence the vision in the glass. Above its well-worn coat and skirt its neck rose unsuwanlike to its unprovocative chin. Its lips and finger-nails were naked. Its cheeks had no soft bloom. Its nose was purposeful but had no other virtues. Being veiled by no lashes to speak of, its gaze was appallingly direct. The eyebrows, behaving quite presentably near the bridge of the nose, grew hysterical on the off-sides. The hair looked like seaweed dying in the sun. Nothing dazzled, glittered, scintillated or even shone, except the nose.

"Do you know," the assistant said at last with a tremulous smile, "I think perhaps Moddom had better stick to her own style—if you see what I mean?"

I knew it would come to that in the end. It always does.



"TO BRING ABOUT THIS RESULT I SHALL EXPLORE EVERY SEAL-HOLE AND LEAVE NO ICEBERG UNTURNED."

At the Play

"A PARTY FOR CHRISTMAS"
(HAYMARKET)

"EATING and sleeping," says one of the characters in *A Party for Christmas*, "that's about all we do at Christmas-time." The *Firbanks* family, of Egham, do a little more than that, for the love-affairs of the two sons and the daughter all pass through a number of misunderstandings before coming right again. In making them come right I feel that the dramatist is bowing to what he believes to be the requirements of comedy against his own instincts. Most of the fun in his piece comes from his exposure of callow youth. A number of points are acutely observed, in particular the way very young people generalise from anything which happens to themselves, and the way they feel the most temporary setback to be irretrievable and catastrophic. These points are driven home, but they would gain in force if there was no pretence that what we were witnessing in the case of each of the three young people really was a true love-affair and not, as is so much more probable, early incidental misfires. Because if we cannot take their love-affairs a little seriously the whole of the *Firbanks'* Christmas as a spectacle rests on the broad shoulders of an uncle from New Zealand, *Uncle Fred* (Mr. MILTON ROSMER). *Uncle Fred* is extremely good fun, a garrulous bore, so free from vanity that he talks the whole time on the often remote off-chance that what he is saying may amuse somebody and that he may not have said it all before. His wife, *Alice* (Miss SYDNEY FAIRBROTHER), is also a bore in her way.

The trouble with stage bores is that if they are realistic they tend to be only too successful in boring the audience as well. This yawning pitfall is skilfully evaded, because Mr. ROSMER and Miss FAIR-

BROTHER are practised hands, but the dramatist has not done much to help them. He has given them fat parts, but he has not subordinated them, as such characters must be subordinated, in

dinner scene, for instance, in which *Uncle Fred* gets drunk, is very much the performance of a one-man band, and one without very many instruments, for most of the time the other characters sit silent and comfortable at the table. The Christmas dinner would have made a sketch in revue, and that perhaps expresses the main weakness of *A Party for Christmas*—that there is hardly an evening's entertainment in these very minor discomforts which quite comfortable households undoubtedly incur when from family affection rather difficult relations are added to the Christmas circle.

Of the young people *Caroline* (Miss JENNY LAIRD) is the most attractive, largely, I think, because Miss LAIRD manages to forget that she is acting, or at any rate to make us forget it. Her brothers are acted in a finished but self-conscious way, and so is the elder son's fiancée. *Caroline's* young man, *Antony Davidson*, is a good sketch of the boundless self-confidence of a beginner in journalism, and Mr.

LUMSDEN conveys very well not only the self-confidence but also the obvious lack of any particular gifts. As a man he does not strike us as a proper match for the vitality and charm which Miss LAIRD lends to *Caroline*. The father of the family, *Robert Firbanks* (Mr. PERCY MARMONT), only really comes to life when he is suddenly asked to read the Second Lesson in church, and ends the play in a flurry of self-importance.

The dramatist's trouble has been to work into a unity all sorts of little points like this, things which bear the marks of actual observation, of how little real fun can accompany the conventional Christmastide activities. He has been careful not to exaggerate, for he is not writing a farce, but, by keeping close to the actual, he has been hard pressed to make a three-act play. His material would have divided into several good and lively little sketches, but it does not succeed in amounting to very much more. D. W.



YOUTHFUL JEALOUSY

Pamela Sutton MISS MARY MARTLEW
Stephen Firbanks MR. HUGH BURDEN
Michael Firbanks MR. DENNIS PRICE

the general framework of his play. It is altogether too slight. The Christmas



THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT

Elinor Firbanks MISS MARGARET EMDEN
Fred Matheson MR. MILTON ROSMER
Robert Firbanks MR. PERCY MARMONT

At the Music-Hall

"THESE FOOLISH THINGS" (PALLADIUM)

EVERYONE with a proper relish for physical violence will enjoy the show at the Palladium. Wit is all very well in its way, but for sheer downright under-the-waistcoat laughter commend me to the spectacle of a man (or better still a woman) being belaboured, beaten, thumped, thrown to the ground, jumped on, harried with eggs and put to the question by water. No one, I am sorry to say, actually has all these things done to him at once in *These Foolish Things*. There seems to be a kind of unwillingness to knock any of the cast actually unconscious. But of course the performance is twice-nightly and I only saw the first house. They may be less squeamish in the second.

Mr. GEORGE BLACK, who produces, has the good sense to keep his extremes of violence till near the end of the programme. MANLEY and AUSTIN do not begin their encounter before Scene Eleven, but it is worth waiting for. I cannot remember all the lady does to her massive partner, but I know she hits him over the head with a fiddle, slaps his face, pulls one of his coat-tails off, jumps repeatedly on his stomach, and shows at all times a praiseworthy readiness to push his face over backwards with her feet. And he, splendid fellow, is not idle. Even when handicapped by the presence of one of her feet in the slack of his trousers, he still shows fight. Altogether it is a glorious set-to and, to minds as uncultured (or as full of repressions) as my own, extraordinarily funny. After these two prize idiots have removed themselves, still breathing, NERVO and KNOX appear in the auditorium as female cleaners and have some more fun—particularly with a member of the orchestra, who has a bucket of water tipped down his trombone (or what-not) and is subsequently soundly chastised with brooms. They also cover up the front row of the stalls with a dust-cloth—a procedure which should be far more widely adopted.

This Cleaning Up scene ought, I think, to be the last on the programme. It makes a good climax, and the Sun-bathing scene which follows it could well be dispensed with. This latter is much too long and exploits rather too freely the dubious humours of the bust—and (I may add) so on.

Before we leave the delights of violence I ought to mention the Stuart Morgan dancers, three muscular men and a girl. I have seen a good many women flying through the air in my time, but never one who flew so far or

at the apple every time it comes round and continues until not a pip of it is left. On matinée days I estimate he must eat three apples a day. Yet he does not look excessively robust. The badminton—well, to one who has never seen it played before it is a revelation of the speed, the skill and the extreme delicacy of shot that this game calls for. Mr. KEN DAVIDSON can play drop-shots behind his back, from a distance of twenty feet and more, that fall over the net with barely an inch to spare. If you have an ignorant tendency to despise badminton go and see these players in action.

There is of course a certain amount of "spectacle." A display of furs will please women at any rate, and there is a "Picture in Porcelain," in which the indefatigable Professor ERNEST STERN has given rein to his love of the lavish. "Hawaii" and "A Grecian Idyll" are notable chiefly for appearances by the Stuart Morgan dancers and some interesting piping (Pan-style) by FANICA LUCA.

Through all these varied delights the Crazy Gang wind their casual way. Their best friends could hardly pretend that their humour is always effective or that they are individually first-class comedians; but they have a pleasant air of not caring much whether anyone thinks them funny or not, so that their weakest jokes do not annoy as they would if made by a more aggressive comedian. This sounds such tepid praise that I hasten to say they do at times work up to a

really funny pitch. FLANAGAN, assisted by ALLEN, sings "Music, Maestro, Please" quite nicely.

That seems to be about all. It is no good going to the Palladium and expecting to be titillated with subtle wit and delicate satire, but if you like a good robust laugh and clever variety turns you could go almost anywhere and fare worse. H. F. E.



rotated so rapidly as Miss LITA D'ORAY. What does she think about as she goes to and fro? Something pleasant apparently, for she always comes down smiling, even when her shapely nose is only arrested within an inch or two of the boards. This is a first-rate turn for those who have no old-fashioned ideas about the place of woman in the home.

Two excellent items earlier in the programme are some juggling by BOB DUPONT and a game of badminton. Everybody loves a juggler. Mr. DUPONT's special charm is his ability to eat an apple while keeping it, a plate and a table-napkin circling in front of his face. That is to say, he takes a bite

"CARELESS MOTORING AT MELKSHAM.
DEVIZES GARAGE PROPRIETOR HEAVILY
PENALISED.
SUSPENDED FROM THE WHEEL FOR
A MONTH."

Wiltshire Gazette.

Isn't this just a teeny bit too medieval?

Aunt Number Thirty-One

"I THINK," announced Aunt to a bunch of the family, "I shall celebrate my seventieth birthday by having my photo taken and giving you all copies."

"Attagirl!" said the Great-nephew—under his breath.

"A really good likeness?" asked the Eldest Nephew tentatively.

"Of course!" replied Aunt with asperity; but we knew what he meant. Seven years ago out of a clear sky Aunt had distributed among her unsuspecting relatives a "Cabinet Portrait" of herself which was absolutely terrific. All the recipients had to put it on view just in case she popped in, and it simply dominated the room, keeping all conversation in undertones and frightening the children, while nervous dogs used to stand and bark at it for hours.

I think Aunt must have suspected a little of this, for she went on: "Anyway, it'll be your fault if you don't like it, because I'm going to a place where they take lots of little ones on one sheet and you can all help me select the best."

A week later Aunt turned up proudly with a sheet of what the Great-nephew promptly christened "Les Tiller Girls." We pulled ourselves together and looked at them.

Well, they weren't so much a mere collection of forty-eight photos as a complete story without words. You know the way these photos are taken. There is a very dazzling light, and even more dazzling blonde who runs the camera; and this, once started off, gives you

about two seconds between the taking of each picture. During this the blonde says monotonously: "Now look up! . . . Now down! . . . Smile, please! . . . Look over there! . . ." and so on, while the nervous sitter keeps moistening lips and starting afresh. All this of course was quite out of Aunt's range of experience.

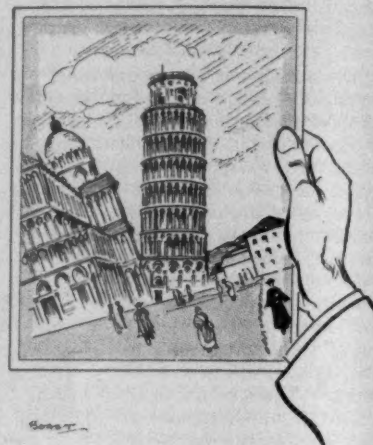
The first six photos therefore showed her facing straight at the camera, obviously still in full spate of conversation about the rush she'd had to get there, and how she never made a good picture, and she rather thought the light was in her eyes. The next three showed her staring with increasing earnestness over to the right and asking "Where?" while the following one showed her looking back again and saying "There's nothing there!" and the one after that was a beauty of the back of her neck, with the usual hairpin poised for a dive, as she once more tried to track down whatever it was the girl wanted her to look at, and which was obviously *some-where* in the room.

At this point I think the blonde must have begun to giggle, because then came a series which might be called the Life-History of a Forbidding Frown or Putting Young Things in Their Places. At its climax it almost approached the famous Cabinet Portrait of seven years ago. Something—probably an abject apology—then swept the frown away in one picture, followed by three registering polite inquiry and one a nod of ultimate comprehension. Aunt had apparently gathered that the photography was about to begin. The next therefore was Aunt saying she was quite ready and the two after that were completely blank. (We gathered afterwards she had suddenly dropped her bag and was retrieving it.) The next was blurred—the blonde's suppressed laughter no doubt—and then came three grim "portraits" reminding one somehow in their tragic intensity of Sybil Thordike as *Lady Macbeth*.

Then came the masterpiece.

The only way any of us could account for it was that the blonde, finding she had now reached No. 31, had suddenly launched an impassioned appeal to Aunt to "smile, smile for the love of Mike!"

The result was just too terrible for words. Over the *Lady Macbeth* characterisation had been imposed the most ghastly forced leer one could ever hope to avoid. (A beam of light flashing into the camera eye from Aunt's gold tooth hadn't of course helped.) It was more than half-witted; it gave the old lady a look so completely gaga that we shuddered and drew away. One could



"AND THIS IS A SNAP I TOOK OF THE TOWER OF PISA."

almost see the shadows of the looney-bin bars across that yammering countenance. Even Aunt had noticed it was unusual.

"Not that one, I think," she said primly.

"It's—it's not very like you," gulped the Eldest Nephew. The Great-nephew merely emitted an awed "Coo!"

No. 32, thank Heaven, showed the smile fading, and the next half-dozen or so slowly restored Aunt to sanity. By 41 she was in her right mind, and 42, which showed Aunt with a faint reminiscent smile, was quite good. "I'd just remembered an address I wanted to give the Vicar," she explained. The next two were also good—good of her left elbow, that is, as she gathered up her umbrella under the impression it was all over. The next three showed her recalled and resentful. In the last one she was giving the address where they were to be sent.

It was more than an epic—it was a saga. Indeed, if it hadn't been for that ghastly No. 31 it would have been amusing and instructive to have the whole sheet.

We settled unanimously on the "Address-for-the-Vicar" one, and Aunt ordered enlargements to be sent to each one of us. But it was a pity she didn't notice that the reference numbers were the ones *underneath* the photo and not on *top*. For the picture above 42 on the sheet was 31, and that's the one we've all just got.

A. A.

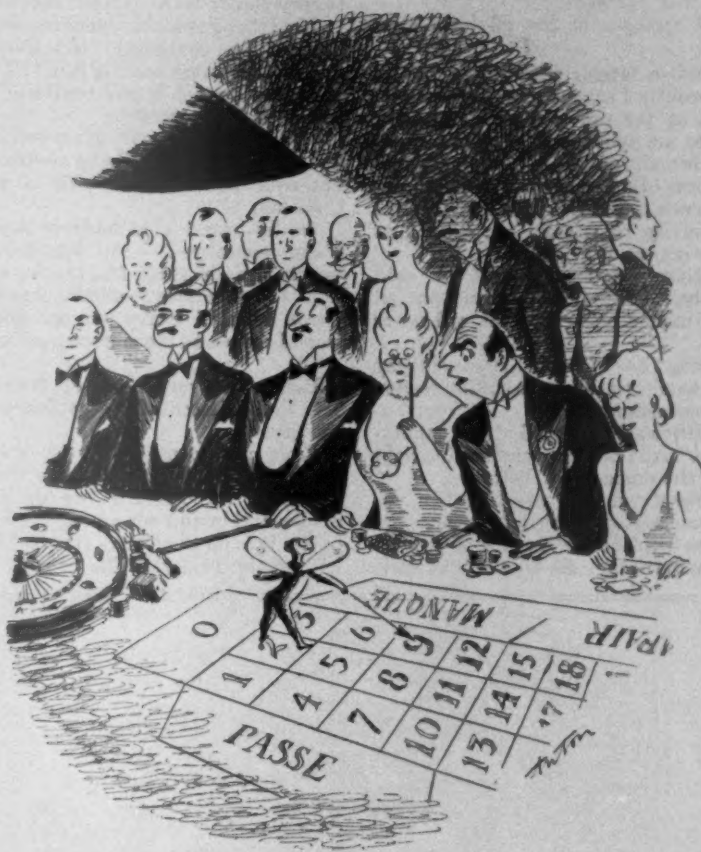


"THERE'S A MOST UNUSUAL-LOOKING BIRD ON THE LAWN."

Fixing It Up

"ANOTHER three minutes, please. Well, it looks like Thursday, doesn't it? If my A.R.P. class is Monday and Guy's Territorials Tuesday and whatever it is you and Peter do on Wednesday. Shall we say Thursday, then? Well, now the evening is fixed it won't take us a second to decide which play. Did you say you'd seen *Spring Meeting*? And Peter's seen *Me and My Girl*. Well, look, what I thought was the Palladium, only you can't get any tickets for six weeks. Guy says he really only wants to go to something with seventy-five people on the stage together all dancing and singing. Are there any spectacles on now, do you think? Did you say *The Corn is Green*? Yes, I know she is, but are there any peasants in it? We do both absolutely bar things with peasants in them.

"Well, do you know anything about *Lot's Wife*? What's wife? That's what I said, *Lot's Wife*. Is it a period piece? I mean, fancy dress and everything? Biblical and that? No, of course I don't call Owen Nares as a clergyman biblical or period. Oh, you mean *Robert's Wife*? I've seen that. But look here, *Troilus and Cressida* in modern dress? Well, perhaps if we had a good enough dinner Guy wouldn't notice it was Shakespeare. Yes, another three minutes, please, though I'm dead sure that wasn't more than two. Shall we go to *Black Limehouse*?—or perhaps if Peter's just joined the Auxiliary Police Reserve it might rather put him off his stroke to see a crook drama. Does he have a helmet, darling, or a truncheon? Yes, I know, we must think. Ask Peter if he'd like *Good-bye, Mr. Chips*. But why not? He says that somebody in his office took their small boy to it, and he doesn't want to waste an evening seeing something that people can take their small boys to. Well, what does he want? What? A slice of life? Something with the action in a reformatory? Do you know anything about *Glorious Morning*? Guy says he saw that on the films with Katherine Hepburn and it wasn't a S. of L. at all. Do you think *She Was Too Young* would be the thing? I mean, how young was she, because I absolutely draw the line at child actors. There are some in *Dear Octopus*? Well, that was no good anyway, because Guy saw *Autumn Crocus*, lured there by one of his aunts, and he said, Never again. Then there's *The Flashing Stream*: I don't know about your brow and Peter's brow, but Guy's brow's absolute limit is Mr. Priestley, and even then he is generally an Act



"I CAN'T HELP FEELING, HARRIET, THAT IT MUST BE AN OMEN."

behind. And I think *They Fly By Twilight* sounds a bit Russian. . . .

"Yes, another NINE minutes, please. Well, Iris darling, it looks rather as though your bit of moral rearmament would be to go to *Spring Meeting* again with us. Everyone says it's marvellous and that they've often stayed with the people in it. It's no use your going on saying you've been there before. Yes, I know, I heard you before quite distinctly. Oh, you mean it's the name of a play! No, darling, too nostalgic; we don't want to club together and see how middle-aged we can feel. Yes, *Nine Sharp* is heaven, but we've seen it four times already. What's Mr. Cochrane doing all this time, and Noel Coward? Mooning about in a battleship, I suppose. How about *The Fleet's Lit Up*? What's that? Is that Peter making a fuss again? He says it's too clean? My dear, Guy hasn't made any difficulties at all,

except that naturally he doesn't want to go to anything where you have to think. It really seems to me the only thing to do is to put the whole thing off for six weeks, which almost will be 1939, and go to the Palladium then. Good-bye, darling—Happy New Year.

"Hullo. Hullo. Is that the Exchange? Look here—I practically couldn't hear a single word during that conversation. The line was very bad. I had all that trouble for nothing. Don't you think the best thing would be if you didn't charge for that call?"

"Cranbrook Operatic and Dramatic Society have abandoned the production of 'Fanny and the Servant Problem' owing to members being unable to attend rehearsals.

Their problem has been absentees from rehearsals; members have been unable to attend."—*Local Paper*.

At last! We knew we should get at the truth in the end.

Searchlight on Europe

(With apologies to *Sir Phelap Gabbis*)

1938—a fateful year indeed!

Recently I sat in Rome in an apartment at the top of Trajan's Column beside the yellow waters of the Tiber. My friend, an Italian high in the counsels of a certain B. Mussolini, not unknown in the Eternal City, watched the smoke rings from his cigar float out over the Quirinal.

"Your English policy," he said simply, "is mad. You have put all your money on a bus that will never start."

"What bus?" I asked, narrowing my eyes to slits so as to give the impression of great astuteness.

"Fifteen," he replied, "and twenty-three." And he blew a smoke-ring right over the dome of St. Peter's.

Fifteen and twenty-three! The Roman sunlight faded from my eyes and in its place rose a vision of Camden Town in the fog. My nose caught again

the faint tang of the fried-fish shops in the Old Kent Road. Fifteen and twenty-three! So he thought that too!

"And that bus which you fail so often to catch," he continued, "it is travelling on the wrong lines, is it not?"

"Buses do not travel on lines," I reminded him severely.

"Not trolley-buses?" He raised his fine eyebrows quizzically as he looked out over the majestic ruins of the Coliseum.

Trolley-buses! That made me think, I can assure you. And fifteen and twenty-three at that! But that he was right I had perforce to admit. And his words weighed heavy on my heart when I set out on the morrow for Paris.

Paris—the very heart of France! The Gallic Mecca of the gallant and the gay!

From my room above the Folies Bergère I looked out across the Place Vendôme, through the Arc de Triomphe and in and out among the bois of the Bois de Boulogne. (Dash! I've left out the Tuilleries. Never mind.)

That night I dined at a restaurant where also they danced.

To eat in Paris surely is to understand the soul of France. For all the genius and valour, the pain and passion, the fierce ecstasy and something too of the bitterness of a mighty nation go to the making of those wonderful fish-sauces. One must admit also that butter has something to do with it.

When at last I raised my eyes from my plate I perceived that I was not alone. The spirit of France, dark-eyed, red-lipped and roguish, was seated opposite to me at my table. I ordered wine and raised my glass to a gracious lady.

"What of the spirit of France?" I asked.

"Pas si mal," she replied.

"Si mal as what?" I pressed.

"Si mal y pense," she evaded.

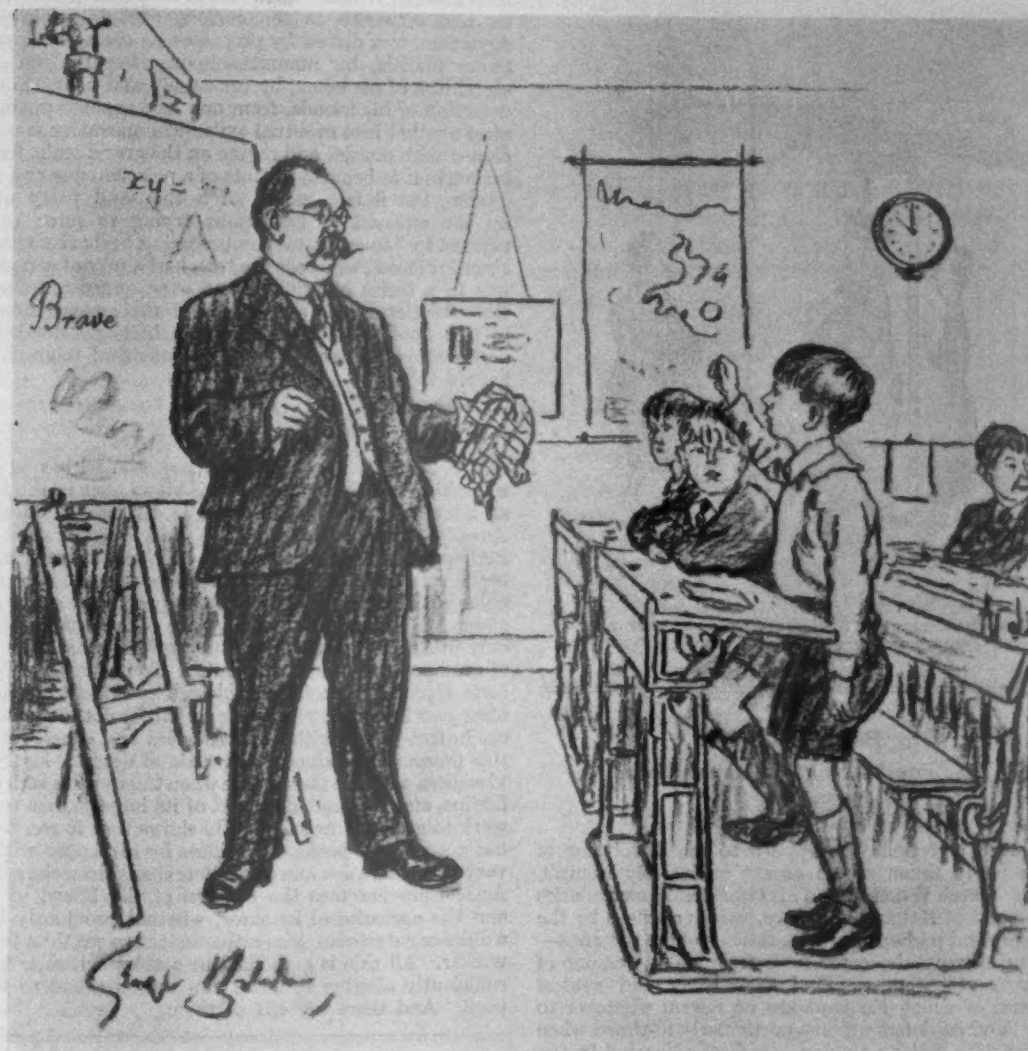
I tried another line.

"The five-day week is bad business, is it not? How do you find it yourself?" She shrugged and smiled enigmatically.

"This band makes a good rhythm,"



"WE'RE PLAYIN' FUNERALS."
 "AND WHOSE FUNERAL IS IT?"
 "DUNNO; I'M ONLY THE 'ORSE."



"NOW WHO CAN TELL ME THE OPPOSITE OF 'BRAVE'?"
 "PLEASE, SIR, 'YELLER.'"

she said, and tapped a dainty foot in time to the music.

Thus encouraged, I drew the Maginot Line on the cloth with my fork and outlined Czecho-Slovakia in salt. Then I sprinkled in the Sudeten areas in pepper and placed a pickled onion to represent Herr Hitler. With a smile I looked up to meet those dark eyes in question, but—she was gone.

Gone!

Then I saw that she was dancing with a young man from the next table.

And I sat long at muse upon the women of France, Madame de Stale,

Joan (the d'ark one), the Scarlet Pimpernel and a mighty host of others. To me they came, these ghosts of great ladies, and bent over my map with troubled faces. And tears came into the eyes of some, and others sneezed (because of the pepper), but one and all they left me and faded into the motley throng upon the dancing-floor.

Weighed down with a sense of tragedy and a surfeit alike of fish-sauce and symbolism, I bent my head to brush my bill with reverent tips as I passed out, dim-eyed, upon the gaily-lighted boulevards.

J. B. E.

The Flying Flea Again
 "Pest Pilot, an epic of the air."
Wireless Programme.

Unsealing the Oyster

"Efforts are being made to induce a member of the Royal Family to open the bazaar on the first day and Earl Baldwin on the second day."—*Daily Paper.*

"Weather will be fair but cloudy in most districts to-day, but to-morrow will probably move in over Western districts and gradually extend Eastwards."—*Cambridge Paper.*

Where it will collide with yesterday, if you ask us.



"WHY, MRS. FISHER! SO YOU WERE THE TINY LEAF FLOATING AROUND IN MY CUP OF TEA."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Glorious Revolution

THE epithet "glorious" as applied to the Revolution of 1688 has lately taken on an accent exclusively ironical. Headed by Dutch WILLIAM and his Continental mercenaries in the interest of Holland *v.* France, vainly opposed by the most sincere and perhaps the most fatuous of the STUARTS—whose own mercenaries came from Ireland—it was one of those masterpieces of political expediency and cynical compromise of which England has no reason whatever to be proud; and its defence seems particularly ill-timed when we are smarting under a similar *volte-face* engineered by the oligarchy it gave us. Professor GEORGE MACAULAY TREVELYAN, however, is an enthusiast for *The English Revolution, 1688-1689* (BUTTERWORTH, 5/-), and as his memories of English political theory go no farther back—in this particular volume—than the reign of ELIZABETH, he is able to show that WILLIAM's eighteenth-century successors gave less trouble to their ministers than the TUDORS and STUARTS. The mediæval notion of a king who should protect the poor against the rich means nothing to him. Given his bureaucratic bias his tale is very well told, especially its final chapters on the less roseate revolutions of Scotland and Ireland.

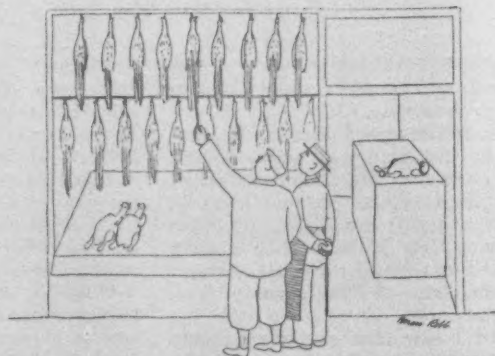
Germany's Way With Culture

The continuing struggle for existence beneath the raffle on the surface of the poets, idealists and thinkers who constitute the Germany we had learnt to love and respect, is strongly illuminated in the story told by EVA LIPS—*What Hitler Did to Us* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 10/6). The

writer's husband, professor of anthropology and a man of international repute, whose scientist conscience would not let him subscribe to the current cant in exaltation of Aryanism, was driven by preposterous charges of insulting State officials, by innumerable interferences and police searchings of his home, by censorship and boycott and the desertion of his friends, from one honourable appointment after another into eventual exile. The narrative is not concerned with murder and rapine on the grand scale, for there is time in it to bemoan the fate of a poisoned dog or a ruined garden, but it is a record of a thousand petty affronts by the meanest of barbarians trying to force cultured persons to "co-ordinate" by becoming barbarians likewise. Frau Professor, who tells the tale, had a way of carrying the war in a series of brilliant and even amusing sallies into the reception-rooms and offices of their persecutors, and in this book also, though it is a little overloaded with declamation, she scores further dialectical triumphs over her thick-headed opponents.

Catchpenny Farming

It is not very often that a writer who wishes to reform something succeeds in getting his views over in the form of an interesting novel, but Mr. A. G. STREET has done it in *Already Walks To-Morrow* (FABER AND FABER, 7/6). Perhaps it is because the thing he hopes to reform really needs reforming, for there can be few people who do not agree with his premises, though they may have grave doubts about his conclusions. His subject is the land, which not only in England but all over the world has been the victim of catchpenny methods of farming. To put it in its simplest form, if natural rotation is neglected and wheat is sown year after year it will soon leave the soil fit for nothing, and there are in fact vast territories in America and elsewhere which this process has reduced to a state of desert. Mr. STREET visualises a not-distant future when the world is stricken by famine, and England, deprived of its imports, has to set to work to grow its own food. He shows that it can be done, but not without personal sacrifices for all classes, with years very near starvation and a complete change in social relations. Agriculture becomes the concern of the Board of Trade, and the agricultural labourer, whether previously he was a duke or a dustman, gets rather better wages than the town worker. All this is embodied in a story which is in itself sufficiently alluring to make you want to read to the last page. And there are 431 of them.



"AND WHO WAS THIS ONE SHOT BY?"

Anglo-Irish Scrapbook

To the long spells of minute and desultory reverie that followed a collision with a car in Park Lane we owe Mr. SHANE LESLIE's enchanting autobiography *The Film of Memory* (JOSEPH, 15/-). A fortnight in St. George's Hospital, not too lacerated to muse effortlessly over one's past, is no bad preparation for writing it down in detail. In such circumstances you discover where your heart and your treasure really lie; and this particular annalist's undoubtedly lie in Ireland, though Eton, Cambridge, France and Russia rearrange themselves kaleidoscopically bright under his affectionate scrutiny. Monaghan of the late nineteenth century, a country-house complete with gasoline and the first bathroom in Ulster, retainers of the wittiest and most faithful, kinsfolk of the tenderest and toughest, parsons and priests, buckeens and banshees, a whole lost age of the Orange and Green, illuminate the chapters on "Glaslough" and "The Beresfords." There are subsequently some capital portraits: a black-bearded dwarfish TOLSTOY, for instance, catechising his guest over a vegetarian dinner. But Ireland boasts the best stories; and such happy flourishes as that of the curate who referred to ENOCH—the man "who walked with God"—as "this most eminent pedestrian."

More of Mr. Agate

Seeing that Mr. JAMES AGATE so detests the use of numerals except in arithmetic (he dreads the day when TENNYSON will be printed " $\frac{1}{2}$ a league, $\frac{1}{4}$ a league, $\frac{1}{8}$ a league onward"), it is not easy to understand why he calls the third volume of his diary *Ego 3* (HARRAP, 18/-). This, which runs from August 1936 to July 1938, is a mellower and kindlier commentary than its two predecessors, but no less witty, for apart from the good stories he has collected from other sources its author is quick to make such observations as that at Mr. GOLLANCZ's dinner-parties even the game has two left wings. Once again the matter is an amusing mix-up of theatre, books, ponies, golf, boxing and, above all, people, for although Mr. AGATE's output as a writer never drops below the staggering total of half-a-million words a year, he yet makes time for a social life which would be fatal as a whole-time job to anyone less strong. The best of this section of the diary is the description of his first visit to New York, which grew on him, in spite of his disappointment at finding the local palate undermined by cocktails and cigarettes, the women badly dressed, and the prices appalling. His verdict on the American theatre is that, while production is invariably good and the level of actresses higher than it is here, there is a sad dearth of actors and a general terror of plays appealing directly to the emotions.

In Flanders Fields

(These famous verses by Lt.-Colonel McCrae, a Canadian officer who fell in the Great War, first appeared in "Punch." They are reprinted from our issue of December 8, 1915.)

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

The Road from Rousillon

It is a great thing—would publishers but believe it—to allow a man to write the book he wants to write. Such a book, from internal as well as external evidence, is *Pyrenean* (LONGMANS, 8/6), a travel without a donkey on the reasonably tranquil Franco-Spanish frontier of some years back. The traveller, you are told, is not Mr. J. B. MORTON or even "BEACHCOMBER," but one Miles Walker, whose robust and spiritual philosophy, appetites, prejudices and style are as near to those of his (shall we say?) producer as makes no matter. What is exceptionally delightful about the book is its untrammelled enthusiasm for the right things and its happy absence of rancour over the wrong ones. Naturally it is hard to discover Andorra on the way to

vulgarisation, double-chinned French *mondaines* at Luchon and knock-kneed English barristers at Eaux-Chaudes; but "patience, fleas, the night is long," as we say in the Val d'Aran—and if the main routes are full of pharisees there is a sound preponderance of publicans in the lateral valleys. To put it briefly, a book in a hundred; but, oh, Mr. Miles MORTON "BEACHCOMBER," why no map?

Life Near Basingstoke

The people in BRYAN GUINNESS's new novel, *Lady Crushwell's Companion* (PUTNAM, 7/6), would have served JANE "AUSTEN" for a sly comedy. *Lady Crushwell* exists somewhere near Basingstoke. She is selfish. She would even like to think of herself as generous to her wretched paid companion, *Miss Prinn*, and loved by her. JANE AUSTEN would have sported with her as with *Lady de Bourgh*. Sir Victor (something in the City) is stupid, but he too escapes being dissected by his inventor. Captain Frigley, fatuous and salacious, tries to rush *Miss Prinn* into matrimony, but we get no fun out of him. One longs to see them all squirm under the lash of satire and be annihilated by a discriminating wit. Mr. GUINNESS in his gentlemanly way lets them alone, mentions some points of their tiresome behaviour, but refrains from taking advantage of it. The way of *Miss Prinn*, clergyman's daughter and down-trodden companion, is a somewhat familiar road. A BRONTË would have turned it into a *via dolorosa* lit with gleams of passionate resentment. When she is snubbed, when *Jane Eyre's* breast would have burned beneath its alpaca, *Miss Prinn* slips upstairs and turns on a hot bath; when *Lucy Snowe* would have been yearning wildly, suffering indescribably, *Miss Prinn* (also heartbroken) has a headache and takes an aspirin. No one can deny that this is a true picture of the boredom and futility of well-to-do life in the country nowadays. *Miss Prinn* is as nondescript an English miss as you could meet; but to describe boredom so artlessly results in a novel amusing in places but not too exciting as a whole.

Vegetables v. Greens

The Ambassador who said that the English had thirty-six vegetables, all of them cabbage, is still, or should be, with us. In fact it would not be a bad thing for our menus if we could give boiled *brassicæ* a miss for a year, employing them, like our French neighbours, only in soups and *perdrix* (or *saucissons*) *au chou*. One's only possible quarrel with Miss

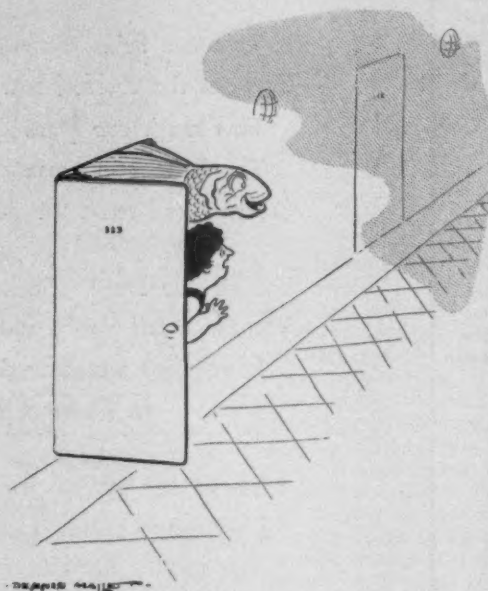
ELEANOR SINCLAIR ROHDE, who has written the best book on *Vegetable Cultivation and Cookery* (MEDICI SOCIETY, 7/6) since the immortal ROBINSON-VILMORIN volume, is that, instead of putting her vegetables in soups and stews when she wants to retain their juices she betakes herself to semi-medical modes of vitamin-conservation which are all very well on paper but look nasty and generally taste nastier. She is obviously a gardener first and a cook afterwards. It is nevertheless impossible to endorse too urgently her chapters on cultivation—her condemnation in particular of artificial fertilisers, or to commend too highly her theory of really constructive manuring, her exhaustive instructions for the cultivation of individual vegetables and the enterprise of her publishers in producing so charming a book at so modest a price.

Witchery

Resisting his tendency to excessive elaboration, Mr. JOHN DICKSON CARR has, in *The Crooked Hinge* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 7/6), written a detective novel of outstanding merit. Its problem is neither too intricate nor too simple, and the *Farnleighs*, apart from the crime in which they become involved, are a memorable family. On the book's jacket is a picture of Mr. CARR's "lumbering" investigator, Dr. Fell, and the proposition put before him is sufficiently tough. Briefly the position was this. Two men were claiming the *Farnleigh* baronetcy and estates; then one of them was murdered, and the *Doctor*, wheezing gently, arrived in a Kentish village to discover that the Chief Constable, with praise-worthy promptitude, had already "washed his hands of the business." A plan of *Farnleigh Close* would have been enlightening, but apart from this omission no fault can be found with this neat and effective story.

Below the Belt

Tom Martin was on the way to become champion British heavyweight when he collapsed in the middle of a fight, and although readers of *Kill in the Ring* (COLLINS, 7/6) will soon know by what means he was slain, they will have great difficulty in pinning down the slayer. Apart, however, from a prize-fighting point of view, Tom's abrupt exit was hardly a disaster, for fiction has seldom produced a more complete egoist. This story loses gusto when Mr. VERNON LODER turns from prize-fighting to crime, but it contains a problem that is neatly handled; and if some of the characters are rather puppet-like, it is possible, at any rate, to sympathise genuinely with the chief suspect.



"STEWARD! STEWARD! COME QUICKLY! THERE'S A FLYING-FISH IN MY CABIN!"

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Charivaria

A SCIENTIST points out that a sharp blow behind the knees has practically the same effect as intoxicating liquor. Porters with luggage-trolleys are now saying "Cheerio!" instead of "Mind your backs, please!"

★ ★ ★

"Loo dearest please come back to me at once I cannot carry on without you. All your clothes are with me.—Tony." *Personal Column in Calcutta "Statesman."*

Isn't it Loo who cannot do the carrying on?

★ ★ ★

A Denver, Colorado, editor who undertook to eat sixty doughnuts gave up at his twenty-sixth. Owing to pressure on space?

★ ★ ★

A naturalist says he has found the African bird known as the Whydah in California. It was probably looking for the Whydah Open Spaces.



★ ★ ★

"The present type of autumn flu should not last more than four days if you take to your bed at once," declares a medical writer. We know one cricket reformer, however, who is determined to play his to a finish.

★ ★ ★

"What would you do with a million pounds?" asks a millionaire. Well, to begin with, we'd ask our bank manager to call in and see us.

★ ★ ★

"The only monk I ever knew," says a writer, "ate fried fish every day of his life." So far as the fish was concerned it was clearly a case of out of the frying-pan into the friar.

★ ★ ★

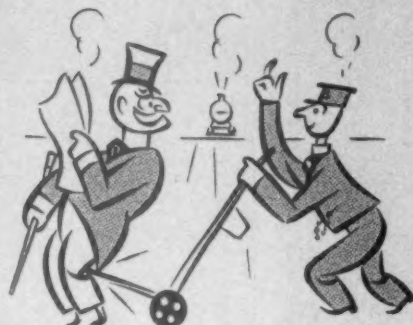
"Instead of dialling '0' and having an operator in Leeds tell them the time from the exchange clock, Leeds subscribers will, under a new speaking clock scheme, dial 952 and go through to London automatically in about a fortnight."

York Evening News.

They will then be told the date.

★ ★ ★

A man admitted in court that he had deliberately stepped in front of a car. With the idea apparently of making insurance doubly sure.



There is no truth in the statement that Bad Godesberg is to be renamed Good Godesberg.

★ ★ ★

"This week he is expected to outline to the Radical congress at Marseilles the decrees-laws to be passed before the period of plenary powers expires. He has promised to speak plainly, but he may still continue to say no more than he possibly can."

The Spectator.

This prediction is perhaps less reckless than it sounds.

★ ★ ★

Some medical men have a perfect genius for wrong diagnoses, we read. This is defined as an infinite capacity for mistaking pains.

★ ★ ★

Giving evidence in court recently a masseur said that a client did nothing but grumble all the time he was treating him. Perhaps he was rubbing him up the wrong way.

★ ★ ★

It has been estimated that about twenty million people in this country take in daily papers. Statistics relating to the number of people taken in by daily papers are not available.

★ ★ ★

A contemporary describes the proprietor of a large London store as "a king of commerce." Monarch of all he purveys.

★ ★ ★

As a wedding-present a Surrey couple, neither of whom plays golf, were made life members of a golf club. As a result they are now playing much better bridge.

★ ★ ★

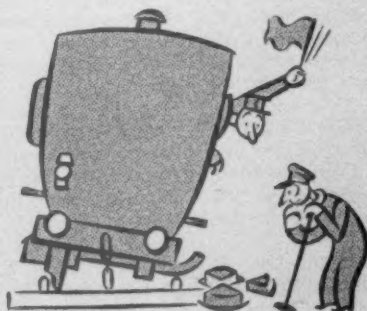
"No rubbish has been carted away for over a year at the Northamptonshire village of Glapthorne, and now everyone has huge, unsightly dumps in their back gardens. The Parish Council is considering the need of a refuse cart."

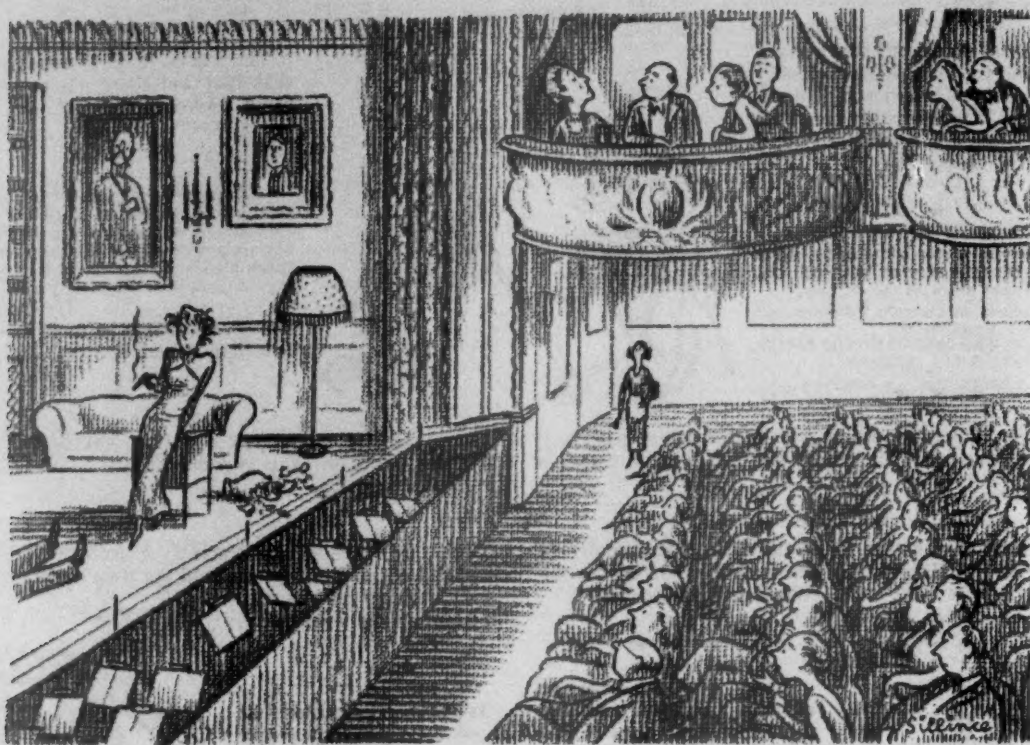
Northampton Chronicle and Echo.

For personal use?

★ ★ ★

An address to be given to a Derby Literary Society is entitled "Why Do I Do It?" by a railway wheel-tapper. So he's beginning to wonder too.





"I DO NOT APPROVE OF YOUNG WOMEN WHO SHOOT THEIR HUSBANDS."

Memoirs and Mutterings

By Lord Stephen Mothwell. CRABTREE AND MOTHWELL, 18/6.

It is now some twenty years (or, not to waste words, it is exactly twenty years) since my uncle, Lord Stephen Mothwell, passed away. At the time his death passed almost unnoticed. He was not a well-known or popular figure—indeed I have heard him described by people who ought to have known better as "an eccentric nobleman who through a morbid dislike of draughts passed the greater part of his life in his greenhouse." Nothing could be more unfair than such a description—as though he had only one greenhouse! But leaving that question aside, we of the family, who knew and loved him, felt that although we might be richer, the world was the poorer by his death. And with the publication after twenty years of his intimate memoirs, he establishes his claim to immortality, to a niche in the literary pantheon of his country.

Few outside the family knew that my uncle was a writer, and few even of the family can have guessed, when they saw him fumbling with pieces of dirty paper, or staring for hours on end at the magnolia blooms in his greenhouse, that he was really making literary history. To the general public this book will be a revelation.

The peculiar excellence of the book is hard to define. It lies neither in the style nor the matter, nor even in the printing and binding, nor yet in a combination of them all.

It is difficult even to cite special passages for commendation. The author's truly aristocratic reticence prevents him from dwelling on one definite subject for any length of time. In a very few words and half-a-dozen colour plates he passes over his childhood (*see* pages 47 to 368), his growing interest in central heating (*pp.* 370-462), his literary ideals (*see* Editor's Preface). We get the impression throughout of a lovable character who preferred to hide his light under a shovel rather than compete in the open arena of popular favour.

Yet in spite of this reticence my uncle was the intimate and valued friend of many famous people. A constant succession of eminent men and women enjoyed his hospitality at Mothwell Towers. There can have been few distinguished figures of the Victorian Age whose *IOU* he did not possess, and some may even have exchanged a word with him in the course of a stroll through the shrubberies, where Lord Mothwell was engaged in scientific research. The fruit of this intimacy, long delayed, is seen in this volume. It is a veritable compendium of social history. Portrayed by a master hand, the dazzling throng of the fair, the noble and the learned moves almost invisibly across its pages. Here Disraeli whispers into the ear of Florence Nightingale; here Tennyson rises amid a breathless silence to sing "The Maiden's Prayer"; here Palmerston plans the first railway line from London to Sutton Coldfield. The very wealth of the material is an embarrassment to the reviewer: to particularise is to be guilty of injustice. But it is safe to say that to the ordinary reader not the least charm of this

book will be my uncle's anecdotes of the famous people he knew.

Here is a story he laughingly tells of that Regency madcap, George Eliot, the toast of many a ball at Mothwell Towers. The occasion was of course Charlotte Brontë's wedding day:—

"The day before Jane Austen was married she was asked whether she felt happy.

'Happy?' replied the famous novelist, 'I feel as though I had found ten cents inside a hard-boiled egg.'"

Here, of course, my uncle slyly hints of the *cause célèbre* which was soon afterwards to split the literary world from top to bottom. As a contrast he tells how he was affected to tears at Browning's deathbed, when the dying poet, calling him by name, delivered his last immortal message: "Roll up the map of Europe. I think I could eat one of Bellamy's pork-pies. Ring down the curtain, the comedy is ended. Kiss me, Hardy. More light! I seem to be taking an unconscionably long time a-dying."

He is as much at home with the politicians as with the poets. This little story he tells of Gladstone shows that even the hand that guides the Ship of State may sometimes be baffled by lesser problems:—

"Gladstone is said to have possessed a pair of trousers so wonderful that whatever was put into the pockets turned to gold. One night before retiring he hung them up in the drawing-room as usual, but when he went to

put them on in the morning he found that some thief had removed his pocket-book.

He said nothing at the time, but later in the day he called the servants together and told them to hold out their right hands. As he expected, one man held out his left hand instead. Gladstone asked the reason.

'I'm left-handed, Sir,' was the reply.

Gladstone thought for a moment and then ordered them all to hold out their left hands. The man went on holding out his left hand. Gladstone thought again, but this time there was no result."

Disraeli too was my uncle's intimate friend, and I cannot resist quoting here a delicious *mot*, which as far as I know has never previously seen the light:—

"On one occasion Disraeli wished to purchase soap to prop up a table of which one leg was shorter than the others. Taking sufficient money for his purpose, he went to a shop and explained what he wanted. The shopkeeper handed over a bar of soap.

'Thank you,' said Disraeli.

'Thank you, Sir. Good morning,' said the shopkeeper. But 'Dizzy' went one better.

'Good morning,' he replied."

There are no such rapier wits among us to-day, alas!

I hope that these brief extracts will have served to show the quality of this extraordinary book. I can only urge the public earnestly and even desperately to buy it, to read it and to treasure it, but above all to buy it.



"THE HOT CAKES AREN'T SELLING VERY WELL, MILLY."

Odds and Ends

EVERYTHING gets better and better. At a dinner of the Noise Abatement League Lord HOEDER announced that somebody had invented a silent pneumatic drill. We at once sent out a representative of this paper to interview the oldest pneumatic driller he could find and ask him how this news affected him personally and the pneumatic drill trade in general.

We did this because Bouverie Street is the centre of the pneumatic drill industry. All the most famous road-drillers of the age have served their apprenticeship outside our windows and look back with pride to the days when they first went to Bouverie Street and were told to break it to bits and throw it about and put it back again.

"It'll seem a bit eerie and lonesome at first," said the grizzled doyen of a band of road-wreckers to whom our reporter addressed his remarks. "We gets to like the sound of our old drills, just as we do the voice of our missuses; but it'll mean work for hundreds and hundreds and hundreds if so be that it's true."

The profession of pneumatic road-drilling, he went on to say, in spite of the enthusiastic crowds of sight-seers which it always attracts and its consequent *réclame*, is growing more and more unpopular with the younger generation because it hampers self-realisation and interferes with the free play of persiflage and repartee enjoyed under the old system of road-destruction. That is why you will often see long bare stretches of glittering roadway without a single driller at work, although the surface is eminently suitable for demolition, and unemployment figures, alas! are higher than they were a year ago.

"The silent road-driller," Mr. Mudge averred, "should encourage lads to come back into the business again and enable the Borough Councils to put half-a-dozen pneumatic drillers at every important road and street junction throughout the Metropolis during the busier portions of the day."

Mr. Mudge, we are glad to hear, has been invited by the B.B.C. to a symposium at which he will discuss the

various methods of road annihilation with other banditti and give a demonstration, if possible, both of the old and the new types of pneumatic drill, so that listeners can judge for themselves which they prefer.

We have received a copy of a West Indian paper and been asked what we think of a poem printed therein under the title

THE SAD AND SECRET SOUND.

It begins like this—

*What a sad and secret sound is a "Good-bye"!
Changing from word to water in the eye—
Troubling the heart you love to a bitter cry.*

*"Good-bye" is like a broken china doll,
Whose hundred pieces each is integral—
A puzzle on the floor, from crib to wall.*

*"Good-bye" is like a little golden fish
Found floating on its home inside a dish—
Where thought provided all that it could wish.*

*"Good-bye" is like the dusty brown repose
That settles deadlier than winter snows
And strikes with gradual lightning on the rose.*

*"Good-bye" is like a child from nether lands
Who comes with a host of lilacs in his hands—
While natives laugh, and no one understands.*

We like it very much. It is the kind of poem that makes us want to write something of the same sort ourselves. It doesn't seem too difficult and it lets you say exactly what you please.

*"Good-bye!" is like a piece of almond-rock
That strikes the table and upsets our hock
When we are feeding at the Ritz or Troc.*

*"Good-bye!" is like a broken paragraph
Of which we have not seen the second half,
That either makes us cry or makes us laugh.*

*"Good-bye!" is like a little turtle-dove
Thrown by Herr Hitler to the heavens above,
Bringing to all the nations peace and love—*

or, if you prefer it—

*"Good-bye!" is like a lot of natural doubts
On peace in Europe and its whereabouts,
What with Herr Hitler and these Nazi louts.*

It all depends on what you think of Germany just now. But turn rather to less controversial things. Take this paragraph from the *Rand Daily Mail*:—

"NOTICE

Will any persons who have issued invitations to Mrs. P. E. Simpson, of Sandhurst, kindly communicate with her at once as her bulldog has eaten her engagement-book."

Or this from one of our own Sunday papers:—

"Did you know that Patty Berg, eighteen-year-old American woman golf champion, used to play half-back in a boys' football team until her father put his foot down?"

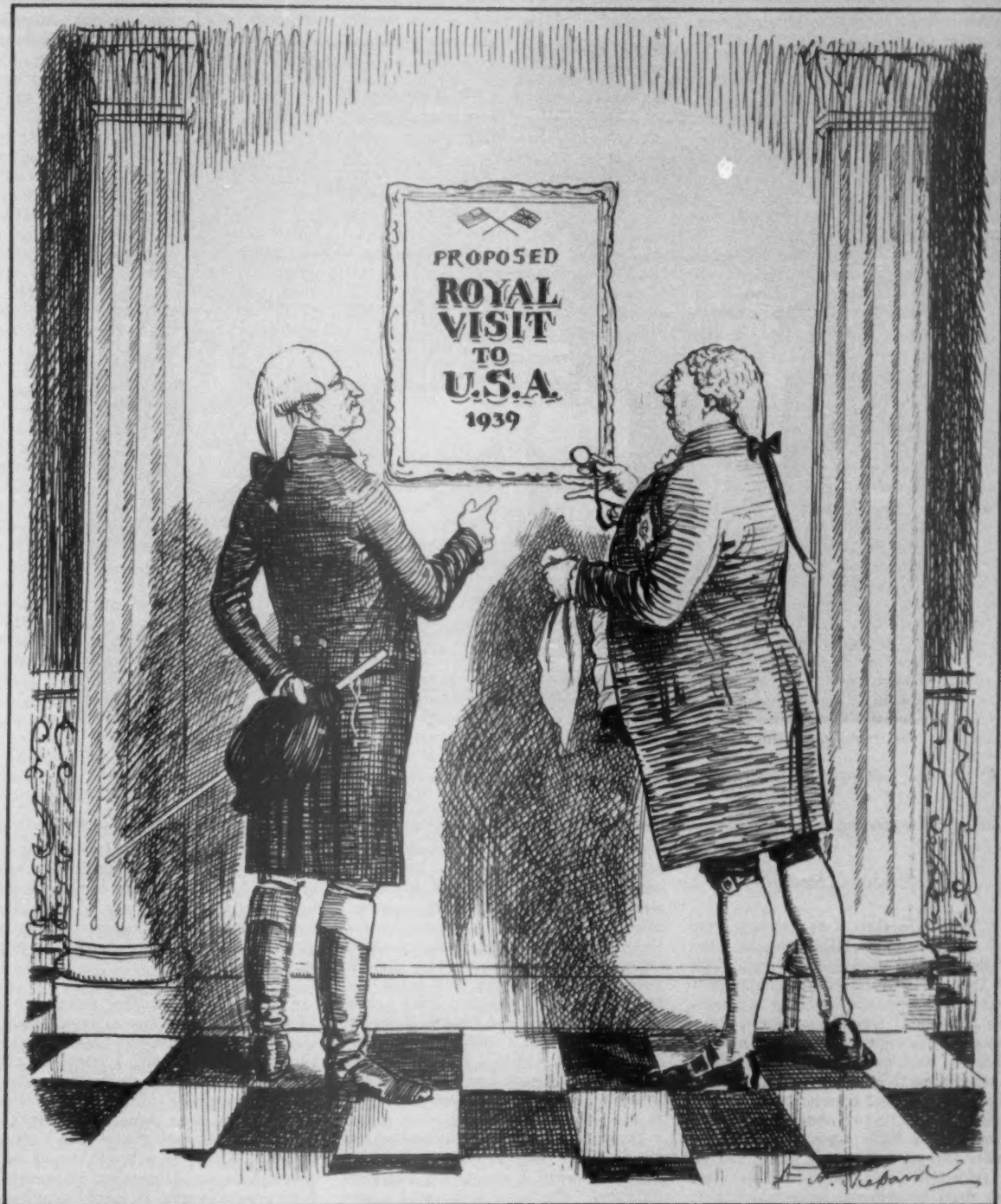
No, we didn't know it. Why should we? And was it in the scrum that her father put his foot down, or where?

EVOE.



THE NEW MAYOR

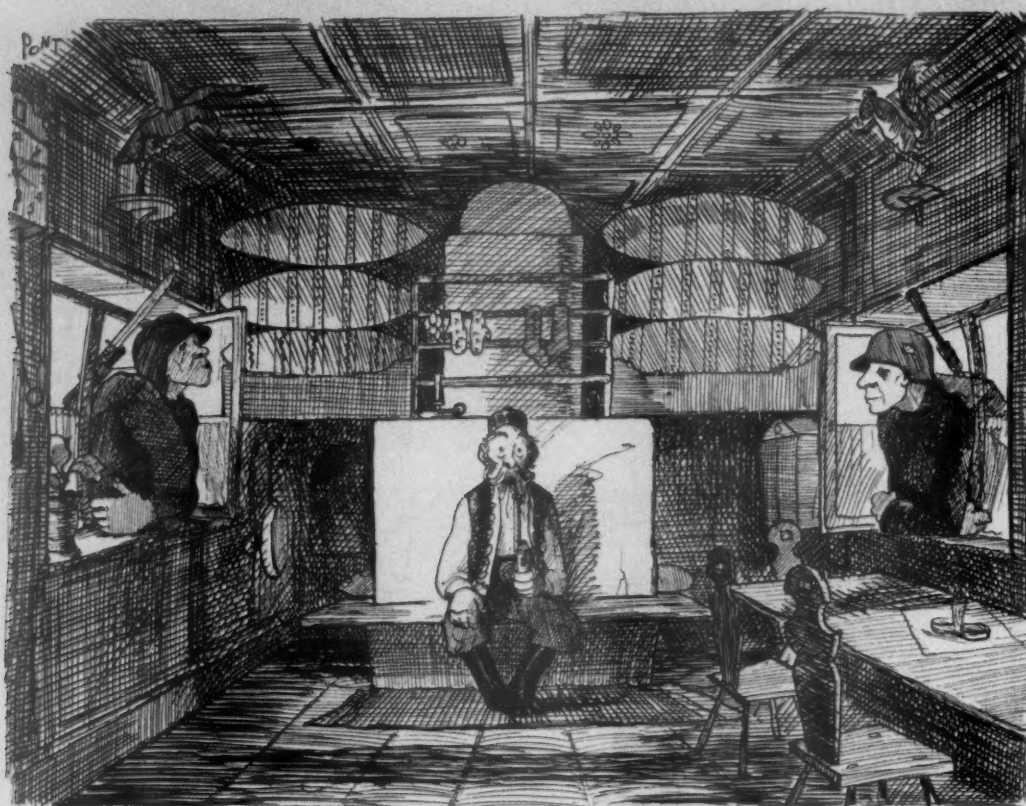
"I HAVE, AS YOU SEE, BEEN DULY INVESTED WITH THE CHAIN OF OFFICE."



CONTACT

George W. "Well! Well! Well!"

George III. "What! What! What!"



AT HOME
CENTRAL EUROPE

Defendant Speaks

"YOUR Worship, I was driving with my wife along High Street; she wished to visit the big shop on the right at the corner of Station Street. Now there was a possible parking space on the right, as I thought, and so I drew across to the right centre of the road in order to back into the opening. When I attempted this feat, however, I found that a good deal of manœuvring was necessary; after two shots my car was almost broadside across the inviting space and my wife was in tears. This in itself would not have worried me, as I am used to difficult moments during shopping expeditions, but unhappily I was by this time obstructing the passage of other vehicles, notably a bus behind me and a huge lorry meeting it. Their drivers became very impatient, and as I drew forward a third time the

bus closed in behind me, making another reverse impossible. The lorry completely blocked Station Street; I wished at all costs to avoid the continuation of High Street, which experience has proved to be fatal, involving a long circuit and a fresh start; and so here, your Worship, I made my great and fatal mistake. I scuttled clean across the road and entered Guildhall Street, on the left, with a quite unwarranted sigh of relief. Before I had travelled two hundred yards I realised from the hostility of other road-users that I was facing the traffic in a one-way street.

A return was now impracticable, and as I could see a policeman some distance ahead I was in an awkward dilemma. But at this moment a sort of agricultural implement entered a narrow gateway on my left and I promptly followed it. I found myself in King's Park.

I had entertained a vague idea of turning round inside and leaving by

the same gateway, but I had to give this up. Narrow pathways led to left and right, and down one of them went my decoy, but there was no room for me. I had to go straight on, down a steep grass slope and on to the bowling green.

I hurried across the green, your Worship. There was a groundsman there, and I could tell by his expression that he was annoyed. I traversed the tennis-courts and drove up the central walk, determined to find another way out. There was some consternation among the general public, but I must impress on your Worship that now and throughout my succeeding adventures I was most careful to avoid accident, and I can honestly say that no one was in any danger on my account.

The park gates were all shut to motor traffic. Moreover the air of dislike which I had already noticed disfigured the faces of all the park-

keepers, and in panic I fled over the miniature golf-course and past the aviary to a gateway which *was* wide enough to pass—the entrance to the City Museum.

Before me was an imposing flight of very shallow steps; on either side impassable hedges. I put my car at the steps, your Worship, and she went up like a bird, except perhaps for a little jolting. It was with real exhilaration that I drove straight in through the great doors and turned into the Department of Mediæval Pottery.

There is no doubt the inmates were startled. Nevertheless they were in no danger, nor were the valuable exhibits in the Egyptian Section, the Picture Galleries or the Manuscript Room, through which I successively passed. Progress was simple except when I was held up by a statue of Robert Peel, from which I had to reverse into the Great Hall. During the momentary stoppage my wife left me, to the relief of both, and mingled unobtrusively with the public.

From the Great Hall I really thought I saw my way clear. I had but to run down the steps into the street and so back to private life. I was disappointed. A few hundred yards along the street I arrived at a barrier, and when I turned round and tried the other way I was held up again. I was of course in a children's play-street, one made inaccessible to ordinary traffic.

Your Worship, I was now past caring. Turning again, I steered through the first gateway on the left wide enough to take my car; it was a back entrance to the Grand Hotel.

Now at one time this had clearly been a tradesmen's entrance and led to a back-door; there was, however, no car road round to any other part of the hotel. But there was a possible incline on the right up to the terrace which almost encircles the hotel and I knew that if I drove round it I should come to some steps leading down to the main entrance. The terrace was fairly crowded, but I did not stop. I proceeded calmly along the east side, admiring the magnificent view of the river and bridge, round the north end, and so to the steps on the west side. I became less calm. The steps yawned before me and I stopped altogether. They were not built for my car, your Worship. I could picture myself at the bottom amid the remains of the car, clutching the squeezer of my hooter. I backed thoughtfully away for a few yards and stopped again.

Well, your Worship, at this unhappy moment the climax arrived.

There was a loud crack, a horrible sensation as of stepping on to nothing, and the car subsided bodily through the floor and fell into the room below. I had backed unwittingly on to the skylight of the billiards saloon; the glass, flimsily protected by a covering of gauze, was quite unable to support my car, which was deposited firmly and squarely on the central table a few feet below.

There was not much damage to either the car or myself. The table was in use, but fortunately the sound of the crash gave plenty of warning to the players, and they were able to

watch my descent from a safe distance. I naturally did not wish to interrupt the game, so I decided to drive off the table. I started the engine, put her in gear and let in the clutch. Your Worship, the car would not move!

There was nothing I could do. My shopping expedition was over. I had to telephone a garage. And that, your Worship, is the true and full explanation of the presence of my car on the match table in the billiard saloon of the Grand Hotel at 3.13 P.M. on the afternoon of October 26th, 1938."

Riding With Other People

THE Major rides ahead
On his red thoroughbred;
The strident air
Is in our hair,
The flies
Are in our eyes.
As through the trees
We squeeze
A dank bough streaks
Our cheeks,
Shooting big tears
Into our ears,
And wood-smoke blows
Up every nose.
Somehow I ought to ascertain
Which is which rein
And whether
I should tuck in this bit of leather.
Next time I mustn't come to earth
When tightening my girth.
It must appear
That here
I am the master of my feet,
I am the captain of my seat.
I mustn't let my pony scent
My breeches also have been lent;
It must obey
The things I say
And cease to shy
At every fly
And wallow
In every bog and hollow.
My poor heart thumps—
The Major jumps,
And Winifred, aged six,
Stampedes across the sticks.
What shall I do
If we start jumping too?
But we do not;
We have got rooted to the spot
And will no further roam
Till all are going home.
Then joyfully we tear
By where
On his red thoroughbred
The Major rode ahead.

Wildly we pound
The ground;
Madly we run
From pool to pool of sun,
Pulsing through space
At thunderous pace,
Save when we steam
Across a stream
Or lurch
To miss a little birch,
Or just go nuts
In ruts.
Through hip
We rip;
Through roar
We roar;
Through underbrush
We rush;
By sicklewort
We strain and spurt;
By silverweed
We speed.
The foam in flecks
Bedecks
The bit
In front of which I sit,
Smearing the tufted turf
With surf.
I must have British phlegm
To be ahead of them.
I must have skill
To be on still,
Even if I've no skin
Or ribs left in.
Insanely fast
A pond flies past
And stacks of hay
(Going the other way).
Still swifter is my rate—
How grand and, oh! how great,
How gorgeous it would be to know
How to go slow!
Tell me for pity's sake
Where horses have their brake!
I do so dread
The major road ahead.

At the Pictures

1789 AND 1938

I THINK it hardly likely that every French revolutionist was round about five foot nine, with long ragged black hair, staring eyes, a bony face, and a habit of shaking the right fist above the head; but I have seen this character in great numbers in all pictures involving the French Revolution, and as usual it is the typical figure in all the crowds in *Marie Antoinette*. I fail to see why it should be so hard to produce credible eighteenth-century revolutionary crowds . . . but, after all, why bother? In *Marie Antoinette* the Revolution as such does not matter at all except as a cause of misery and death to the Queen; it is legitimate to regard the members of the angry crowds as symbols, merely representing, with as little distracting reality as possible, the cause of the worst period of her life, and it is conceivable that the director did so regard them. (But I bet he didn't.)

The picture is extremely spectacular and its cost was colossal. I'm not prepared to say that it was worth it, but then I'm never prepared to say that any spectacular picture was worth the money. The great question is, whether the producers will get it back, and I'm not sure that in this instance they will; for the last part of the film is, naturally enough, harrowing, and one wonders whether people will pay in large crowds to be harrowed even by NORMA SHEARER, even when there is also TYRONE POWER as *Count Axel de Fersen*, who is represented as the great love of her life.

MISS SHEARER is, however, extremely good and gives a moving performance. ROBERT MORLEY is excellent as the clumsy, simple-minded, pathetic *Louis XVI*. There is much to praise in the film, and, for those able to take pleasure in the technical merits of acting and camera-work, much to enjoy. But the Vast Warm-Hearted Lowbrow Public will, I think, resent its gloom.

There is, though, a film for the Warm-Hearted Public such as they seldom get, and two hours of it at that: FRANK CAPRA'S *You Can't Take It With You* is, at intervals, as much of a bath of emotion as the film-*Show Boat*. I hasten to add that I did enjoy it, but undeniably from time to time it is

embarrassingly sentimental. For nearly all the worst moments the responsibility can be laid at the ever-open door of *Grandpa Vanderhof* (LIONEL BARRYMORE). A pawky *Grandpa* who is infinitely wise and knows all about life is



J.H.P.

SYNCHRONISATION

Marie Antoinette . . . NORMA SHEARER

one step better than a pawky Grandpa or other old lady with similar information, but only one step, and I had



J.H.D.W.D.

SELF-EXPRESSION

Grandpa Vanderhof . . . LIONEL BARRYMORE
Mr. Poppins . . . DONALD MEEK

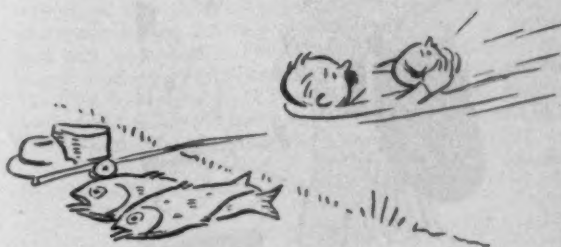
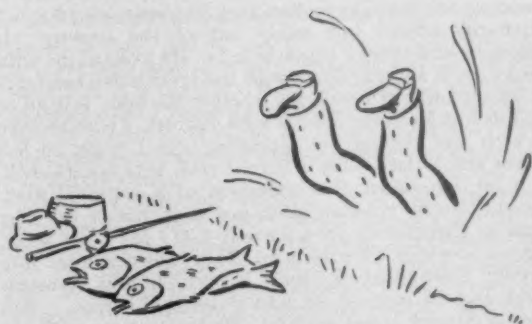
enough of *Grandpa* to last me some time. His "Well, Sir" homely talk with God by way of grace before meals was terrible.

But as a whole the film is good and very amusing: a pure fairy-tale, a mere

wish-fulfilment (I have been interested to note the resemblances and parallels between this story and the one SHAKESPEARE so justifiably called *As You Like It*), but excellent entertainment. There is always fun to be got out of the conflict between the pompous rich and the carefree Bohemians. The *Vanderhofs* are a houseful of people doing exactly as they like and thriving on it, and the *Kirbys* have so much money that their only concern, apart from making more, is to do all the right things socially. The *Kirby* son (JAMES STEWART) loves *Alice Vanderhof* (JEAN ARTHUR), and it all comes right in the end because *Grandpa*, like the British public, is convinced that a crisis will always pass away if he just sits and plays the mouth-organ. Other people in the picture are EDWARD ARNOLD, MISCHA AUER, SPRING BYINGTON, DONALD MEEK and all those invaluable foxy-looking men who appear in every film involving lawyers and big business (for we see *Mr. Kirby's* offices in action, and very well done they are). "Warm" and "human" as well as crazy, this film cannot fail to pack 'em in.

Few people can be more weary of the reporter-and-society-girl story than I am, not many can watch with gloomier boredom the inexorable revolutions of the few much-worn cogs in its plot; and the first minutes of *There Goes My Heart* (wherein the director seems to have been as tired as the rest of us) are not at all promising. As a whole too it is a trivial effort, and VIRGINIA BRUCE and FREDERIC MARCH, both admirable players, are wasted in it; but some scenes are exceedingly funny. Whether for the sake of these to sit through the rest is a serious problem which in the present international situation each of us must decide for himself. Personally I am ready to do a good deal for anything that will make me laugh, in the present international situation.

Black Limelight, an unpretentious British thriller, has several good points. I honestly think it is better—better because less imitative and self-conscious—than the overpraised *This Man is News*; though I do not, candidly, think it is more entertaining. So much of the action takes place at night that nearly all the photography is half-lighted, and this is bound to dim the effect of the whole film. It starts in fact with more than one handicap, but it succeeds in being both thrilling and interesting. R. M.



- HENRY -

Jorkins Without Spenlow



As the gates of Hell were guarded by Cerberus and the Garden of the Hesperides was defended by a dragon, so all of us who do business in Cairo are protected by our Chief Clerks, whose function it is to sit in the outer office and forbid entrance to callers.

But unfortunately even Chief Clerks must occasionally be granted a holiday, and this summer my own Monsieur Joseph has gone on three months' leave. Monsieur Joseph leaves me with reluctance and deprecation. He fears that I may find the hot weather *assez pénible* and suggests that the contact with callers will prove tedious and exacting. I secretly agree with Monsieur Joseph on all these points, but I affect to make light of them. With an air of nonchalance which I am far from feeling I urge Monsieur Joseph to go, to enjoy the *bains de mer* and to divert himself without uneasiness.

On the day after his departure, however, I go to my office with the grave misgiving of a knight who has entered the lists without his shield. I sit down at my desk and try to imagine myself the ruthless captain of industry which Monsieur Joseph has so successfully proclaimed me. Time passes, the office routine proceeds as usual, but no callers present themselves. After an hour I begin to think that no callers will come. My mouth gradually loses its grim line and my features soften to their normal expression of nervous kindness. But just as I am throwing my india-rubber into the air with a gesture of gay insouciance the door opens to admit Monsieur Shouek.

Monsieur Shouek, who is the tenant of an office in the firm's building, is fat and wily and he enters my room with a furtive suddenness. He thinks he has eluded Monsieur Joseph and his face wears an expression of nervous triumph. He does not know me personally but my appearance is reassuring, and when he realises that Monsieur Joseph is not temporarily absent but safely out of the country his demeanour undergoes a subtle change. He looks at me with a crafty smile and sits down with the speculative esurience of a buzzard who is wondering whether the body is dead or not. I look at Monsieur Shouek with distrust. I wish he were not with me. Under his appraising eye I begin to feel helpless and forlorn—like a hermit crab without its shell, like a fat boy under the inspection of a cannibal king. Monsieur Shouek rubs his hands and says that he has long sought an opportunity for a friendly talk. My heart sinks. I have a horror of friendly men. They mesmerise me into accepting their point of view. In five minutes Monsieur Shouek has mesmerised me into reducing his rent. But Monsieur Shouek is not grateful. He looks at me with the surprised contempt of a duellist who unexpectedly discovers that his opponent's revolver is only a water-pistol, and it is evident that he regrets not having demanded twice the reduction. He departs dissatisfied, shrugging his shoulders.

My next caller is a customer called Abdel Rahman. He is a big man from Upper Egypt who wears silk robes and a ferocious black moustache curled up at the ends. The manner of Abdel Rahman is boisterous and, when he finds me alone, exultant. He remembers all the grievances he has had for the past twenty years, all the just claims against the firm which Monsieur Joseph has unjustly disallowed, all the hard bargains which Monsieur Joseph has unrighteously driven. He looks at me reproachfully and contrasts the present unhappy state of affairs with the atmosphere of generous reciprocity which he says characterised his relations with the firm in the time of the previous manager. I listen to Abdel Rahman with uneasy defiance. I know



"FUNNY WE'VE NEVER TAKEN TO PIPES, WALTER."

that he is rich, shrewd and ruthless, that his grievances are inventions and that even Monsieur Joseph has never bested him in a bargain. With the desperate courage of a cornered rabbit I resist the demands of Abdel Rahman, but when at length he is about to depart in dignified sorrow I am suddenly overcome by unreasonable remorse and give in to half of them.

I am now definitely alarmed. I feel that if matters are allowed to take their course Monsieur Joseph will return to find the property given away, the business bankrupt and myself sold into slavery. I consider gloomily what to do and suddenly I have an idea. I recall that, owing to the vigilance of Monsieur Joseph, most of my callers do not know me personally. I accordingly move from my private room and seat myself outside at the desk vacated by Monsieur Joseph.

Shortly afterwards my third caller arrives. He is a suave Jewish gentleman who desires to see the manager on urgent personal business. I reply that the manager is too busy to receive callers but that I am his confidential secretary and that any business he has in mind may freely be revealed to me. The Jewish gentleman demurs, but, now that I am no longer the manager, I overrule his objections with a cynical calm, and he eventually admits that he is the representative of a *famille respectable mais malheureuse* and wishes to appeal for a donation of five pounds. Had I been the manager caught in my private room I should weakly have given in, but now I say that the manager is a *type excessivement nerveux* and unfortunately takes the view that such requests are nearly always swindles; but

that nevertheless, if the gentleman insists, I will speak to him. The Jewish gentleman turns a little pale but is unwilling to lose the five pounds. I accordingly shrug my shoulders and go into my private room. I sit at my desk and talk to myself in low tones. Then I suddenly shout angry words in English and throw a heavy dictionary on to the floor with a crash. I finally emerge in terror from my room and hastily conduct the Jewish gentleman out of the office, muttering that there is no time to be lost.

And now I am wondering whether it is really necessary to retain the services of Monsieur Joseph.

All Clear

"Did you see they are going to do something or other—with the water, I think it is? Such a good thing. Or was it the gas? I know I thought at the time it was badly wanted. They've made an arrangement to do some alteration that will make all the difference. I don't think, though, that it is exactly an alteration; it is just a thing they are doing to whatever it was, only it is very expensive, costs thousands—or *saves* thousands: I know it was one or the other, because I read it, and I thought then how strange to be doing all that *now*, I mean, though I am not sure if they said *when*, but they explained the whole thing, and I thought I *must* tell you all about it, for I knew you would be interested."

Soldiering Without Tears

IN the earlier years of the century when soldiers slept rough and did their marching afoot, the rookie who wished to materialise that field-marshal's baton which he was obliged to carry in his knapsack had to depend for improving literature upon such formal stilted manuals as *Infantry Training*. These, although sound in precept and unexceptionable in expression, held little attraction for the simple mind that liked its literature relieved with a page of conversation here and there and an illustration or two. Occasionally they would run to the frivolity of a trajectory graph or a diagram of the working parts of a Lewis gun, but for the greater part they were pretty solid reading.

It is interesting to find that the War Office no longer considers itself bound to such formality of method. One of its recent publications, *Right or Wrong? Elements of Training and Leadership Illustrated* (H.M.S.O., 6d.), marks a notable step towards the popularisation of military lore. Judged simply as a strip cartoon, restricted as it is by its monitory purpose, it may suffer by comparison with Buck Ryan or Wilhelmina. The captions, designed rather to point the moral than to preserve the chain of narrative, do not always account fully for the sequence of scene and circumstance, but a little constructive imagination on the part of the reader easily fills in the gaps. And with such minor faults as this the book is powerful. It grips.

Once in its stride, the War Office develops the theme of contrast between Right and Wrong with Miltonic simplicity and grandeur. Although it forbears to name the respective champions of Good and Evil, we may think of them as Private Wonn-Wonnteau and Private Constant de Faulter.

When we first meet him Private de Faulter is, in defiance of all the laws of nature and the admonitions of the musketry instructors, trying to pull through his rifle with a right-angle tug. He has shed equipment, tunic, puttees and tin-hat, and they are in a disordered heap on the ground. He has not bothered to remove the bolt from his rifle. His unused ration of four-by-two lies in a puddle, in which he is resting the butt of his rifle. His hair isn't brushed. It is a scene to make any sergeant cluck. In the circumstances the caption "*A careless soldier will soon spoil his rifle by cordwear.*" provides a striking example of moderation and sweet overlooking.

There is only one point that may be in the wretched fellow's favour. The row of piled arms in the background, guarded by a single sentry, seems to suggest that the rest of his platoon have beetled off to the pub without troubling to clean their rifles at all. If this reading of the situation should be correct it seems a trifle hard, I must say, that zeal, however misapplied, should have exposed him so pointedly to the scorn of the armies.

The picture immediately below of Private Wonn-Wonnteau shows how the job should be done. At a glance you can see that the lad is out for stripes. Certainly he has taken off his marching order and his tin-hat, which strikes one as a bit voluptuous, but he has arranged them neatly on the ground as for kit inspection. Rifle-bolt, four-by-two and rifle-butt rest primly on a nice dry log which apparently he has brought with him, as it is not to be seen in the first picture. The pull-through is coming out in a line with the barrel. His hair is lovely and his trousers are beautifully creased above the puttees. Though I notice that he has loosened the top button of his tunic, which shows that the Army is not what it used to be.

In billets the contrast is even more marked. Private de Faulter lies snoring in bed after having broken the picture on the wall and some crockery on the floor. Boots, puttees and equipment are chucked all over the place. Through the door in the next room we see three of his billet-mates carousing—one of them actually has his shoulder-straps undone and another is drinking from a bottle. Although no direct evidence connects de Faulter with the orgy, we feel sure that he started it all and has retired to bed in a drunken stupor.

How different is the behaviour of Wonn-Wonnteau as a tenant of the same billet! He has mended the picture and replaced the china. He has hung his tunic and tin-hat neatly on the back of the door. His towel is spread over the bed-rail and he is sitting with rifle in one hand and oily rag in the other, putting in the time while he soaks his feet in warm water. It is in his eye that when this job is done he will start khaki-blancoring his equipment. His friends, inspired by his example, are cleaning their rifles too, and one of them is darning a sock.

Through the following pages we have many opportunities of comparing the conduct of the two soldiers. We see de Faulter getting into a railway-carriage with his rifle at the secure and breaking a window, while Wonn-Wonnteau and his friends file in at the short trail without even kicking the paintwork.

Both apparently get into the trans-

port section for a while. De Faulter drives in the middle of the road and causes a jam; Wonn-Wonnteau keeps to the left and lets other vehicles pass. De Faulter, when disembarking his load, swings his van across the road; Wonn-Wonnteau pulls into the side. De Faulter pulls up to unload troops in the open at a cross-road (and this is where he first gets it in the neck, for he is spotted by enemy aircraft and blown up); Wonn-Wonnteau, regardless apparently of tactical exigency, won't unload anywhere except in a wood.

Chucked out of the transport—de Faulter because he keeps on getting his vehicles blown up, Wonn-Wonnteau because they can't get him to come out of the woods—both are put on road sentry duty. De Faulter exposes himself and presents an easy target to a hostile A.F.V.; Wonn-Wonnteau, cunningly concealed behind a tree, is passed unnoticed. De Faulter shoots too soon at night and gives his position away; Wonn-Wonnteau realises that the bayonet is silent and has greater moral effect. De Faulter is always letting himself be seen by the enemy at E, or forgetting to allow for wind, or retiring immediately to his rear and masking the fire of his own troops at C, or firing his rifle accidentally at night and drawing enemy fire, or leaving unshaded lights in billets and attracting bombs. Wonn-Wonnteau goes through life hiding behind haystacks and tufts of grass; he always knows the range and the strength of the wind; he retires to a flank—through Switzerland if necessary, one must assume. He keeps his safety-catch up and undresses in the dark. He is particularly good at surprising the enemy, and is so cunning that if he did not have to suffer for the blunders of de Faulter he would hardly ever get blown up or shot at all.

It is notable that in the matter of promotion they seem to advance together. Towards the end of the book, if we are to judge by their responsibilities, they are both commanding companies. De Faulter is stringing his men out on the skyline, forgetting to put out connecting files, marching his men along exposed roads in column of route, and in every possible way failing to mystify the enemy; while Wonn-Wonnteau is being so correct and invisible that the enemy never sees his men until he is wiped out.

I think they will both be appointed to the Staff pretty soon, Wonn-Wonnteau because he is so clean and good at keeping out of the way, and de Faulter because he must be such a pest and a peril in the forward zone. That is, unless they get blown up or shot once too often.

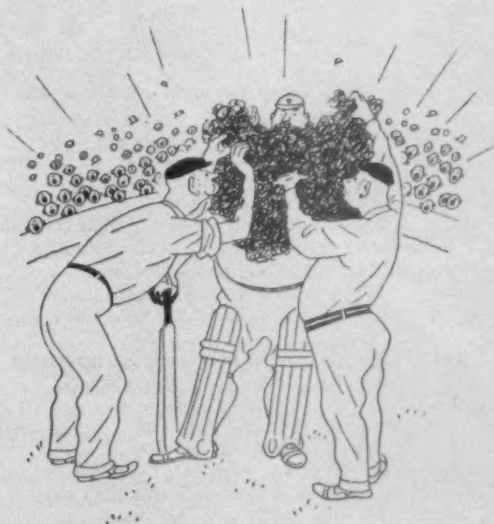
More Clerihews



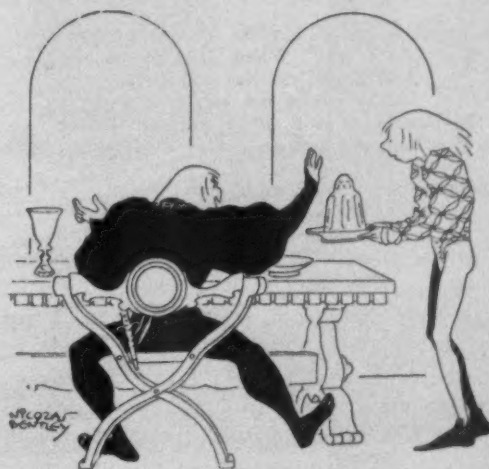
When Macaulay found Brougham
Sitting on a tomb,
He told his anxious friend
He was meditating on his latter end.



Lewis Carroll
Bought sumptuous apparel
And built an enormous palace
Out of the profits of Alice.



Dr. W. G. Grace
Had hair all over his face.
Lord! how the people cheered
When a ball got lost in his beard!



Although Macchiavelli
Was extremely fond of jelly,
He stuck religiously to mince
While he was writing *The Prince*. E. C. B.



"AND THAT WAS OUR VERSION OF HANDEL'S LARGO."

Gas-Proof

I MADE meself a gas-proof room upon me upper floor
 'Cos they said t' me, "When 'Tiler comes along
 And drops 'em 'ere an' there,
 Gas is 'eavier nor air;
 It's the basements as'll get it good an' strong."
 But the Warden 'ad a look an' said, "Y' shouldn't 'a' done
 that.
 Wotever made y' put it up so 'igh?
 Do y' reckon as yer roof
 Is incendiary proof?
 If y' get one through the ceilin' like, yer gas-proof room's
 good-bye!"

So I moved the 'ole caboodle t' the coal-'ole down below;
 An' y' should 'a' seen the gas-proof room I made,
 Done wi' sandbags all complete,
 Oh, it looked a proper treat,
 An' I said, "Now let 'em all come, 'oo's afraid!"
 But another Warden came an' said, "Y' got the 'ole thing
 wrong;
 Can't y' see y've been an' built yerself a trap?
 If the 'ouse above comes down,
 W'y, I'll bet y' 'alf-a-crown
 Yer precious gas-proof chamber'll be flattened off the
 map!"

"Well," I says, "we'll scrap the livin'-room an' fix it in
 between—
 Neither basement like nor attic like, y' see?
 Course it's ruinin' the 'ouse,
 But we mustn't go an' grouse,
 'Cos we got t' do our bit for A.R.P."
 But, blimey, if they didn't come an' say, "Wotever's this?
 Don't y' know as gas-proof rooms is in the cart?
 All the engineers 'as said,
 'Ave a garden trench instead.'
 Gas-proof rooms, y' silly cuckoo! 'Ave a 'cart!"

Well, I wish they'd make their minds up, for it seems t' me
 it's gas
 Of another kind wot's goin' t' do us in.
 Gas-proof rooms is only one
 O' the jobs wot's t' be done
 An' wot *won't* be done by waggin' o' yer chin.
 I'm a law-abidin' citizen; I'll do just wot they say;
 But, lumme, let 'em get it said an' pass
 To the other items. Lor!
 Tell a feller wot 'e's for,
 Or we'll lose the bloomin' winter an' we'll lose the bloomin'
 war;
 An' I'll tell y' wot'll lose 'em for us—*Gas!* H. B.



THE ARYAN ARK

Herr Hitler (to the Bird of Peace). "Get along and find me some colonies."

Impressions of Parliament

Tuesday, November 8th.—This morning the new Session of Parliament was opened by the KING, after their Majesties had driven to Westminster in



SHAFTS OF WIT FROM HASTINGS

MR. ("1066 AND ALL THAT") HELY HUTCHINSON.

state; and this afternoon both Houses met to listen to the traditional speeches moving the loyal Address and to fire the first few shots in the debate on the Government's legislative programme which will continue more seriously tomorrow. Parliament is never quite itself on this first day. The atmosphere is not unlike that of a speech-day at a public school; everyone is slightly better dressed than usual and certainly more polite.

The task of moving and seconding the Address, an ordeal generally reserved for promising new Members, was apparently accomplished in the Upper House with grace, wit and good sense by the Duke of NORTHUMBERLAND and Lord BRIDGEMAN; so Mr. P.'s R., unable to be in two places at once, was credibly informed. In the Commons, after the King's Speech had been read, Mr. HELY-HUTCHINSON led off more amusingly than is the rule. Being the Member for Hastings, one or two sound jests were waiting for him on a plate, but he added to them with a nice wit and scored heavily when he said that, as a member of the Milk

Marketing Board who represented a constituency where there were no farmers, he hoped to comment on the Government's agricultural programme in words no less tactful than those attributed to a former leader of the Liberal Party: "I cannot conceive how anything I may or may not have said could or could not have given anyone any impression whatever." He was ably seconded by Mr. MARKHAM, whose suggestion that the House should be brought up to date by labelling one Lobby "Sez You" and the other "Include me out" pleased everyone.

Mr. ATTLEE, who began the more serious business of the day, recited a list of omissions from the Speech, such as the League, unemployment and nutrition, and found in it symptoms of the Government's debility which sounded like an advertisement for a patent medicine, which perhaps Socialism is; but though he trounced the Government for their backwardness in rearmament (this never fails to be funny from the Opposition), he was bound to approve of the projected Bills to reform the penal system, check cancer, and trip up the hawker of bogus shares.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, who followed, was delighted that the KING and QUEEN should be going to the U.S.A. as

well as to Canada, and spoke cheerfully not only of the way in which defence organisation was progressing but also of the factors governing future trade. For the Liberals Sir ARCHIBALD SINCLAIR criticised the Government's foreign policy as being vague in principle, and for the I.L.P. Mr. MAXTON, at his most genial, hoped that the share-pushing Bill would not make a possible later evacuation of the City unnecessary.

Of subsequent speakers the strongest



DITTO FROM NOTTINGHAM

MR. ("ROBIN HOOD") MARKHAM



"Never was heard such a terrible curse!
But what gave rise
To no little surprise,
Nobody seemed one penny the worse!"
The Jackdaw of Rheims.

["Sir STAFFORD CRIFFS dipped deeply into the vocabulary of denunciation."
The Times]

was Mr. BOOTHBY, who with great sincerity and force urged the Government to respond to the feeling of the country by instituting while there was yet time compulsory national service and a Ministry of Supply.

Wednesday, November 9th.—Before this afternoon's debate Mr. CHAMBERLAIN, in moving the appointment of Colonel CLIFTON BROWN as Deputy Chairman, paid tribute to the late Captain BOURNE, who had held that office with distinction since 1931. Mr. ATTLEE and Sir PERCY HARRIS added the sympathetic regret of their parties.

The debate got nobody very much further. It was marked by a most immoderate speech from Sir STAFFORD CRIFFS, a capable summing-up of the position by Mr. BUTLER, and an intervention by Mr. LLOYD GEORGE which earned him a very violent reproof from Mr. PETHERICK.

Sir STAFFORD, who painted his picture in the most lurid colours, described the Government as betrayers of democracy, spurning Russia, aiming at a Four-Power pact with the Fascist States, and waiting to make a cynical profit



Host. "AND, WHAT'S MORE, ALL FAKES—EVERY ONE OF 'EM."

from the Sino-Japanese war. In particular he deplored the absence of any mention of India in the Gracious Speech. It seems he would have fought gladly last September; but if he has forgotten how lately and how vehemently he inveighed against rearmament, others have not.

Mr. BUTLER reminded the Opposition that the Government had taken the lead in efforts to reform the present weaknesses at Geneva, and that recently the League had centralised in London the organisation for dealing with refugees. As for the P.M.'s statement, out of which the Opposition were trying to make so much capital, when Mr. CHAMBERLAIN had said that the reconstruction of China would need British help he had certainly not meant, as had been suggested, that this country would lend money to Japan to complete her domination.

Mr. LLOYD GEORGE took the line that Munich had been a shameful surrender and that to ignore such splendid and powerful people as the Russians



OUR BACK BENCH WHO'S WHO

Sir JOSEPH LAMB is safe, we think you'll own,
From all election cares—his seat is Stone.

was madness; but Mr. PETHERICK reminded him that as Prime Minister he had made war on this same Russia, and remarked that once more the House saw him at a time of international friction squeezing poison into the hell-brew for which he had been so largely responsible in the Peace treaties. But Mr. PETHERICK, as he frankly admitted, had admired the hell-brewer when the potion was being made.

SAID a somewhat old-fashioned cham-eleon

Whose notions were Aristotelian,

"Both my parents were red
With blue spots on the head,
And I'm green, so I'm not a Mendelian."

Club Secretaries Please Note

"We are asked to make it clear that Mr. —, who was treated at Bristol Royal Infirmary yesterday for a knee injury, sustained the injury when sub-hunting near Aust yesterday morning."

Bristol Evening Post.

The Bath

I AM performing the opening ceremony, as it were, of the new bath just installed in our home by Messrs. Dupe and Dunn, Contractors (Prop.: R. E. Nammell). It is a magnificent affair seven feet long and as white as snow, and I have already been lying at full length in it for five minutes. The fragrance of a twopenny pine-flavoured bath-cube fills the air.

One cannot help musing that if mankind in his upward struggle had given more attention to baths the world would not be in the parlous state that it is. Whenever I meet a bad-tempered man I forgive him on the grounds that he is probably doomed all his days to bathe in a short bath, such as the miserable affair owned by my old school-friend the Vicar of Nether Drooping, in which I had the misfortune to bathe several times when I stayed with him in the summer. At school the Rev. Percy Server (known in those days as "Knobbly") was a human ray of sunshine in whose mouth even margarine would melt. At the age of twenty-three he was appointed curate of St. Conifer, Castlebury, whose vicarage boasts one of the longest baths in England, and his sunny benevolence made him so popular that the Vicar hastened to recommend him for the vacant living at Nether Drooping. His friends were quick to note the change in him. In the old days he had revelled in the works of P. G. Wodehouse, and the staff used to gather outside the bathroom door at St. Conifer's for the sheer pleasure of hearing his gay chuckles as he read luxuriously in his bath. Shortly after his removal to Nether Drooping he developed an unhealthy passion for *Foxe's Book of Martyrs*, *Potford's Inquisition* and *Droville's Latter End*.

I wondered sadly at the change until I went to stay with him last summer and introduced my protesting body into his bath, which is less than five feet long and has a surface like sandpaper. The hole where high water goes out is also placed much too low, allowing a maximum depth of a mere five inches. The floor of the bath is deeply curved, so that comfort is impossible, and owing to the shortness of the thing it is humanly impossible to submerge the whole person at the same time. Personally I tried to get a measure of comfort by first letting my knees stick out, and then, when they began to feel cold, lowering them and sticking my feet up at the far end. The only result was that I got my feet jammed under the taps and lay there, trapped, until

the water was quite cold, when the Vicar released me with a bitter smile.

"I had a similar experience in the August of '32," he told me, "and while lying there I mentally roughed out the first chapter of my *After Life: Do We Want It?* which got me into such bad trouble with the Bishop. I was in danger of being unfrocked, but the Bishop came to spend the week-end with me to give me a last chance to recant. He had a bath on the Saturday night and said on Sunday that there were after all two sides to every question. He had another bath on the Sun-

day night, and on Monday morning he shook hands with me in the warmest possible fashion and agreed to write a brief Foreword to my second edition."

All of which goes to prove, I think, the importance of adequate bathing facilities in the modern world. Even in International Affairs baths might have a decisive effect. If the Peace Pledge Union were to present Hitler, Mussolini and Stalin with magnificent baths and adequate supplies of bath-salts Munich might yet prove to be not in vain, for these three all bear the hall-mark of short-bath men.



"IF YO' LAFF AT ME SO MUCH YO' TETH GO ALL BLACK WID DE SUN."

At the Play

"THE SHOEMAKER'S HOLIDAY"
(PLAYHOUSE)

If you have been depressed listening to joyless pedants while they persuade you that never at any time was England really "Merrie England," your hesitation will be banished immediately by THOMAS DEKKER, that good journeyman dramatist of the Elizabethan stage, whose *Shoemaker's Holiday* is "Merrie England," or rather, perhaps, "Merrie London," put down resolutely in black and white, but with all sorts of colours in addition. It is almost a fairy story, and the plot the stuff of pantomime—the romance of the great genial *Simon Eyre* (Mr. EDMUND WILLARD) and his rapid promotion to the singularly glorious and delightful office of Lord Mayor of London. SIMON EYRE flourished under HENRY V., but DEKKER brings tobacco and much else of his own day on to the stage, and the *King* is a representative composite monarch, perhaps more like EDWARD IV. than anyone else.

The play has plenty of incident, so much that the swift and lucky rise of *Simon Eyre* is itself no more than one of several lively threads. There is the love-affair of *Rowland Lacy* (Mr. HAROLD WARRENDER) for *Rose Oateley* (Miss ELIZABETH MAUDE), daughter of that apoplectic old merchant, *Sir Roger* (Mr. MORRIS HARVEY), who is *Simon Eyre's* predecessor in the mayoral seat. This is the story of true love frowned upon, through difference in blood, but frowned upon to very little purpose. At a deeper level of feeling there is the very touching story of *Ralph* (Mr. JOHN MORTIMER), a journeyman who is pressed for the French wars and whose wife, quite beautifully played by Miss RACHEL KEMPSON, mourns him for dead and is only saved at the church door from an unenthusiastic second marriage. But these happenings all take place in a setting which is itself agog with vitality and good-humour, and the real hero of the play is a collective hero. It is "the gentle craft," as embodied in a spirited

group of friendly shoemakers, men intensely proud of their calling, and extracting a great deal of fun out of their lives.

Hodge (Mr. JORDAN LAWRENCE) is technically senior in *Simon Eyre's* workshop, but pride of place belongs to *Firk* (Mr. HEDLEY BRIGGS).

Mr. BRIGGS is a great comic actor, and as long as he is on the stage there can be no lack of liveliness in the audience as there is none on the stage. *Firk* has to a pre-eminent degree all the traditional Cockney qualities—a ready irreverent wit, great good nature and good temper, and a joy in pricking the bubbles of pretence. Mr. EDMUND WILLARD gives to the part of *Simon Eyre* just the right note of natural dignity, struggling with an irrepressible love of fun, so that the household of master shoemaker and journeymen strikes us at once as completely natural; and although *Firk* and *Hodge* quite obviously are continually walking out with their tools they never in fact go, and there is the warmest reciprocal attachment binding them all together. If *Margery*, wife of *Simon*, has obviously a difficult time, Miss MABEL CONSTANDUROS makes us see that *Simon* has married her for her high spirits and that she is fully a match for all the changes and chances of her bustling life.

Miss NANCY PRICE's production uses a stage setting of a courtyard kind which enables the repeated changes of scene between the city and *Sir Roger Oateley's* houses at Old Ford or in the city itself to be easily indicated by the appearance of a manservant bearing a large card.

What is so remarkable and so attractive about this production of *The Shoemaker's Holiday* is the way it communicates in all sorts of little details the sense of life in sixteenth-century London. When *Rowland Lacy* slips back from the wars disguised as a German travelling shoemaker his welcome, the custom about standing drinks and the other rituals of these tradesmen, their unfailing humour in the idea of a German and the German language, put before us a way of life which was the normal pattern of industry for so many centuries. The play cannot help being first-rate propaganda for Guilds and the Distributist movement, for it is a celebration of business before it was



A MIND OF HER OWN

Sir Roger Oateley . . . Mr. MORRIS HARVEY
Rose . . . Miss ELIZABETH MAUDE



CRYING HIM INTO A JOB

Rowland Lacy . . . Mr. HAROLD WARRENDER
Firk . . . Mr. HEDLEY BRIGGS
Simon Eyre . . . Mr. EDMUND WILLARD
Hodge . . . Mr. JORDAN LAWRENCE

depersonalised. The easy household traditions, the intimacy between *Rose* and her maid *Sybil*, are also echoes from an earlier time when there could be and was much more freedom of speech and familiarity, because domestic relationships were understood to be of their nature more enduring. We get a trace of the hard-fisted moneyed man in Mr. BROMLEY DAVENPORT'S realistic picture of *Sir Hugh Lacy, Earl of Lincoln*, but he is worsted in the end as though he were the villain. *The Shoemaker's Holiday* is too good-natured a play to carry a real villain, but *Sir Hugh* represents everything for which DEKKER and his audience had no sympathy, just as *Simon Eyre* is the incarnation of the kind of great-hearted, unaffected and humorous man of whom the crowd, gladly and with a sure instinct, made its hero. D. W.

"ELISABETH OF AUSTRIA"
(GARRICK)

It was no joke to be picked on by the Emperor of Austria to share his rickety throne. When *Franz Josef's* choice fell on a little girl with bare legs and pig-tails who knew more about horses than deportment, gloom over Schonbrunn was inevitable. There was *Mama*, bitterly resentful that her successor as Empress should be a tomboy who at every turn outraged the holy whalebone of Hapsburg etiquette; there was *Ludwig*, the mad and beautiful King of Bavaria, who had always been *Elisabeth's* greatest friend and whom she missed so terribly when she went to Vienna; and then there was the fact, from which there was no getting away, that *F. J.* himself, though a worthy conscientious fellow, was unutterably mat, as the photographers say, as a husband. *Elisabeth* had to run away in order to demonstrate that she was grown up (the birth of two children having quite failed to do this). After that *Mama* retired from Court, and *Elisabeth*, in spite of finding life very sad, made a tremendous success of being Empress.

This is one of those plays where so much time passes that in almost every scene its people have acquired another ounce of whisker and a few more inches of stoop. Its authors, Miss KATRIONA and Miss ELIZABETH SPRIGGE, confess on the programme to having abandoned strict historical accuracy; but to me this seems to matter

less than that they have not been more selective in what they have used. There is promising stuff for the stage here, but it is spread over too many scenes and wrapped up in far too many words. *Elisabeth* and *Ludwig* are its real points of interest, and while the one spends too much time with minor characters, the other only comes on for a single brief scene. The language has dignity and sometimes fire, but to balance the pomp and slowness of Imperial movement it should somewhere, somehow, be funnier.

Miss WANDA ROTH does well in the name part. With few breaks she

brunn comes alive again with the pageantry without which it is dead.

One small point in the action. How was *Elisabeth* expected (supposing she had not been assassinated) to get from Geneva to Vienna in "a few hours," and especially as she was to start by boat?

ERIC.

At the Music-Hall

ROYAL COMMAND PERFORMANCE (COLISEUM)

THEIR MAJESTIES were very warmly welcomed by as packed a house as I have ever seen. The programme, in aid of that excellent charity, the Variety Artists' Benevolent Fund, skimmed the cream of current talent for them pretty thoroughly. As a gesture to the QUEEN tartans played a large part in the dressing, and bagpipes were operated with so much enthusiasm that at one time they must have been audible in Kensington, or so it seemed to me, to whom their rude and savage message has never been intelligible. At the end Mr. LUPINO LANE led a demonstration of the "Lambeth Walk," assisted by a distinguished company which included Miss IRENE and Miss VIOLET VANBRUGH, Miss MARY JERROLD, Sir SEYMOUR HICKS and Mr. NELSON KEYS. Mr. GARY COOPER was in the audience and remained a spectator of the latest of the lunatic shufflings which pass in these days for dancing.

To me the best of the evening was Mr. RICHARD HEARNE, who gave his brilliant solo from

Running Riot of an old gentleman inveigled into doing the Lancers. It is a magnificent piece of comic dancing, and Mr. HEARNE can compete with Miss DRAFER at peopling an empty stage. *ELSIE* and *DORIS WATERS*, "Radio's Gert and Daisy," gave some good Cockney stuff, and *MURRAY* and *MOONEY* made me laugh a lot with drivel which was sheer drivel but funny. Miss *EVELYN LAYE* in a lovely dress sang glamorously. Putting the weight with an acrobatic lady could hardly have been done more neatly than by the *STUART MORGAN DANCERS*, from the Palladium, and from the same show came *KEN DAVIDSON* and *HUGH FORGIE*, who play badminton so desperately well that they can afford to play at playing badminton.

ERIC.



NOT A HAPSBURG HABIT

Archduchess Sophie MISS ENID LINDSEY
Elisabeth MISS WANDA ROTH

is hard at it for nearly three hours, passing from a *gamine* to an old and disillusioned lady going out calmly to an expected death; through all the intervening stages she keeps the essential *Elisabeth* intact and interprets her with charm and spirit. So far as *Franz Josef* goes, which is from a weak young man to a gruff desk-autocrat, Mr. GYLES ISHAM fills him out royally. As *Ludwig* Mr. RICHARD AINLEY is given an opportunity which he seizes with something like inspiration; his performance is so good that it is a pity there is not more of it.

The eye can find no complaint, for Mr. GOWER PARKS leads it to the Bavarian lakes and to Vienna with discretion and authority. Both his sets and his dresses are delightful. The lake asks to be plunged in, Schon-

Forcursue on Golf

FOR several years now General Sir Armstrong Forcursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., has contemplated writing a book on golf.

There are two reasons for this: the first because it will annoy his three golfing opponents, Commander Harrington Nettle, Admiral Charles Sneyring-Stymie and Lionel Nutmeg of the Malayan Civil Service (Retired); the second—and the most important—because the General feels that there is a real need for a standard text-book on our Royal and Ancient pastime written by the long handicap player for the long handicap player.

"And, damme, it must be blatantly obvious to the veriest nincompoop," he will often bellow from the centre of a whirlwind of cheroot-smoke, in addressing his fellow-members at Roughover Golf Club, "that those long handicap players who try to carry out instructions contained in golf books written by experts either become cripples for life or go stark raving mad. Besides," he will continue, "it's so much poppycock thinking that a professional golfer could ever teach a gout-stricken old fool like Nutmeg, through the medium of the written word, how to pivot or pronate; for even if the instructor were there in the flesh and aided by the district nurse, a couple of male masseurs and the village blacksmith, Nutmeg would still go on making his usual number of air shots."

Naturally the General has a great deal of original advice about just how a long handicap player should play his shots, but he is more concerned and much more interested in what he calls "the very stuff of golf." Such matters as "How to



"IT'S ONLY BECAUSE WE BUY THEM IN SUCH LARGE QUANTITIES THAT WE ARE ABLE TO OFFER THEM AT THE PRICE."

get up animal heat before play," "The proper application of an oath," "The technique governing the Concession of Putts," "The Cowing of Caddies," "Reliable Methods for Keeping Back the Match Behind," "Points to Remember when Arguing for Bisques on the First Tee"—these and a vast miscellany of other subjects, ranging from the great "Belt v. Braces" controversy to his own special remedies for such golfing ailments as choleric aftermath and a cricked neck.

And so with the idea of his book foremost in his mind General Forcursue has gradually accumulated a vast number of notes on these and other equally weighty matters; and although much of the material is from his own observations a great deal has been sent to him by his golfing friends in different parts of the world. It is, too, perhaps worthy of record that many of the notes were collected by the General during his long and arduous service in India, and several of these (originally set down on bar-chits of the Putridshindi Golf Club) bear the phrase, "Given to me by So-and-So under the punkah." But in spite of such promises of secrecy the General has now seen fit to disregard them in the common interest. "For the only honour which anyone need bother about in the game of golf," he will sometimes remark with an ugly wink, "is the honour on the tee."

And now with all this material in his hands General Forcursue has recently been faced by the fact that he may never be able to find time to assemble it into a book—a state of affairs which he attributes to the ever-increasing demands that are constantly being made on his leisure hours by A.R.P. work, the British Legion and other patriotic duties.

It is, however, Sir Armstrong's firm conviction that even in their present rough-and-ready form the notes will be of some little service to those many golfers who for better or for worse follow the little white ball.

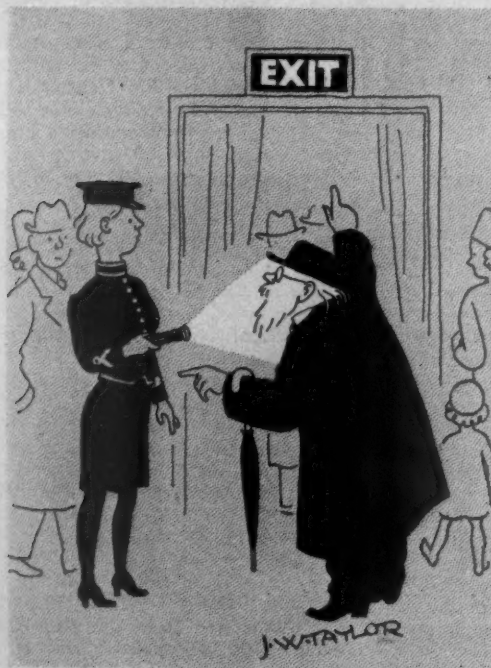
To this end therefore, and aided and abetted by Mr. Punch, publication is made herewith:—

NOTE NUMBER ONE

Concession of Putts

SECTION A. The concession of putts is nearly always an admission of fear, and is only done in the fervent hope that due reciprocation will be made by the opponent.

If, however, the player is so bone stupid as to feel he



"NOW, HONESTLY, HOW DO YOU PEOPLE JUSTIFY THAT THIRD PERSON SINGULAR?"



"HULLO—THIS IS THE ZOO!"

simply must concede a putt the following golden rule should be strictly adhered to—

BEFORE EVEN CONSIDERING THE MATTER COUNT SLOWLY UP TO TEN.

[If the prospective donor is sensitive he should turn his back on his opponent while counting. If super-sensitive he may pretend to light a cigarette; but personally I like to enjoy the fun.—*Armstrong Forcursue.*]

Generally speaking, putts (even the shortest) should never be conceded.

[I have given one putt—8 inches—in my life (Cadaverabad Golf Club, 1903, *Forcursue v. Major "Snakebite" Patterson*), and then it was only due to an appalling misunderstanding.—*Armstrong Forcursue.*]

SECTION B. On the other hand, quite a different proposition presents itself when the player asks that his putt be conceded. This is an extremely difficult undertaking (especially to anyone who has commanded an Army Corps or Governed a Colony), but the following points may be helpful.

(a) Make the appeal in a voice that is nonchalant but at the same time free from trepidation.

(b) A hectoring tone should only be employed if the opponent is timid and at least four down.

(c) When in doubt use the following phrase: "You're surely not going to insult me by insisting that I hole that?"

Special Example. If you and your opponent have both played the like and his ball is fifteen inches from the hole and your own five feet, dash forward and knock both balls

away at the same time, casually remarking, "We'll call that a half."

General Remarks. A few golfers make a habit of inviting an opponent to look at some agency outside the match, and, having thus diverted his attention elsewhere, they contrive to steer their own ball into the hole with club or foot. This, however, is considered degrading and unworthy of any golfer. [Nutmeg often does it.—*Armstrong Forcursue.*]

NOTE NUMBER TWO

How to get up Animal Heat before a Game

"No long handicap man should start to play golf on a cold engine."—*Silas V. Clugg (Chicago).*

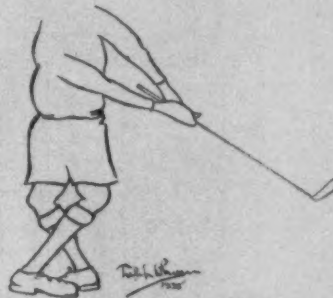
The preliminary waggle and the practice shot are the generally accepted methods for getting up animal heat before a game, but most people find that the heat thus generated falls very far short of requirements. If this is so, golfers might care to try the receipt of Commander Harrington Nettle, who for several years now has made a habit of rushing to the Club bathroom just before a game, taking off all his clothes and giving himself a severe rub-down with a wire brush.

[I sometimes take a pinch or two of Panther Brand snuff. The resultant paroxysms of sneezing soon bring me up to the correct temperature.—*Armstrong Forcursue.*]

(N.B.—I use cayenne pepper on cold mornings.—*A. F.*)

NOTE NUMBER THREE

[The illustration was drawn by Miss Tulip Whinn of the Roughover Ladies' Golf Club. Age 17. Handicap 5." *Armstrong Forcursue.*]



Known as the Tasmanian Interlocking Stance, this will be found very effective with those long handicap people who have a tendency to stamp with rage on the putting green after missing a shot. (Evolved by R. J. P. of Hobart.)

G. C. N.

(To be continued)

Children in Distress

A SPECIAL fund for the relief of the children of Czechoslovakia has been opened by the Froebel Society. There can be no need to urge the suffering and distress of the thousands of refugee children who have been pouring into Prague from the occupied regions. The vital necessity in coming to their aid is speed. Mr. Punch looks to his readers to prove once again their love and sympathy for children, whoever they are or wherever they may be, by sending a contribution now to the Czechoslovakian Children's Fund, c/o The Froebel Society, 28, Little Russell Street, W.C.1. As quickly as money is received it will be sent to teachers' organisations in Czechoslovakia for the immediate relief of homeless and helpless children.

A. F. S.

"Now, gennelmen," says the Chief, when we are duly lined up on the pavement in the light of a street-lamp, "to-night I'm puttin' you on Idrant drill with a real Idrant with real water in it—see?"

We, D Class of the Auxiliary Fire Service of Great Baconfold, titter dutifully. But each of us feels that this is a time for stiffening the sinews and summoning up the blood. There are but four of us, and the Market Place is very public.

"I want you to imagine an Incenduary bomb 'as dropped on the far side of the Market Place, settin' the Town 'All on fire," the Chief continues, rubbing his hands at the thought. "You'll run out three fifty-foot len'ths—"

"Not nearly enough, Chief," protests Tomlin, the enthusiast of D Class. Tomlin is a draper but an imaginative draper, as one may see from his autumn sales notices. The fire-practices are terribly real to him. He it is who insists at every practice that the man

at the nozzle end of the hose shall whistle the regulation "One long blast for Water On." This invariably leads to heated argument with Mooney the butcher, for we have not yet been issued with whistles and Mooney has a hare-lip.

"You'll 'ave to imagine they're 'undred-foot len'ths," says the Chief patiently. "And 'oever fixes the stand-pipe, let 'im remember this Idrant ain't like the practice Idrant in the Station. This one's got real water in it. If it's turned on, someone'll likely find 'imself in a precautious position."

"What's the pressure?" demands young Wilks, a spectacled youth with a passion for technicalities.

"Seventy," returns the Chief cryptically. "That is if Mr. Mooney 'ere 'asn't picked to-night to swill down 'is slaughter-'ouse."

We produce a respectful chuckle, and Mr. Mooney's huge carcass shakes with bashful mirth.

"Now, gennelmen, to business. I may say I 'ad C Class out 'ere last night, and they did this run-out in a clear fifteen seconds. Let's see what you can do. You take stand-pipe,

Sir." I grab the heavy brass tube and stand by. "Mr. Wilks, first len'th of 'ose. Mr. Mooney, second len'th. Mr. Tomlin, last len'th an' branch, the word branch bein', as you know, the fireman's name for what the ornery man calls a nozzle."

The Chief extracts a huge watch from his pocket.

"Everybody ready? Go!"

Instantly all is shouting and confusion. The hydrant cover refuses to come out, the stand-pipe refuses to go in. Mooney drops his hose and Wilks trips over him as he stoops. Only Tomlin is faultless, but by the time his reproachful whistle sounds afar, indicating that the water may safely be turned on, the Chief's watch is back in his pocket.

"Too late, gennelmen," he remarks with fine irony. "The fire's burnt itself out. Forty-four seconds."

Disconsolately we re-roll the hoses under a barrage of comment from a rapidly-increasing group of spectators.

"Once more, gennelmen."

We repeat our act with a slight variation. The hydrant cover comes



"It's right—I 'EARD IT WITH ME OWN MOUTH."



"How much to King's Cross?"

"Two-and-a-penny, Lady, unless you gets into a bus goin' the right way. Then it's tuppence."

out with unexpected ease and I fly backwards into the audience.

"Forty-eight seconds," says the Chief as Tomlin's whistle shrills. There is some ironical cheering from the crowd, now augmented by the driver, conductor and passengers of the evening bus from Maidingley, which has pulled up a few yards away.

Mr. Tomlin's face as he returns from his far-flung post at the nozzle is the face of one who has doomed scores to a fiery death. The Chief gathers us round him, a circle of grim and panting desperadoes.

"Gennlemen, you can do better," he

declares. "Mr. Tomlin, take stand-pipe. You take first len'th, Sir; Mr. Wilks second; Mr. Mooney third and branch. Take my whistle, Mr. Mooney, and let's 'ear that long blarst. Now then, gennlemen, listen 'ere. The Town All's ablaze an' cracklin'. See them flames lickin' out of the windows! 'Ear the women screamin' on the third storey? See the aged caretaker in a precarious position on the roof? *Their lives depends on you.* I shall count the seconds—see?"

Mr. Tomlin sees. His eyes are wild and staring. One can almost detect the glare of the lickin' flames reflected in them.

"Go! One, two, three—"

We work like men possessed in grim silence.

"—nine, ten . . ."

The last connection clicks. Mooney's whistle cuts the air. Tomlin, heedless of agonised yells, mindful only of those shrieking women, turns the water on full. . . .

All those soaking people will complain, of course. But we have beaten C Class's record and saved the Town Hall.

And the Government will pay for the new windows in the Maidingley bus.



"LOOK—THERE GOES ANOTHER ONE!"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

A Social Historian

THE untimely death by drowning of Mr. DENNIS KINCAID last year robbed the world of present-day India's most adequate interpreter. This gives a special value to *British Social Life in India* (ROUTLEDGE, 15/-), his last and most ambitious work. In this volume he surveys the long years from 1608 to the present time, and the result is a delightful entertainment, presented with a wealth of colour and humour. The British race for generations consisted of highly individualised human beings, and these, when let loose in India, gave free rein to their eccentricities. The early chapters describe numbers of fantastic characters who were free to express themselves (mostly in harmless enough ways) in their Asiatic environment. Then with the Victorian age came an increased soberness and solemnity, to be followed by reflections of all the severe changes which have taken place at home during recent years. The effects of the gradual speeding up of travel between the days of the voyage round the Cape and the modern era of air-transport are exhibited with masterly lucidity. Altogether a striking success, achieved in a difficult field. The illustrations are "period" and in subtle harmony with the text.

For to Admire and For to See

One reason why Mr. CARL FALLAS, having published but two novels, has already established himself firmly with the

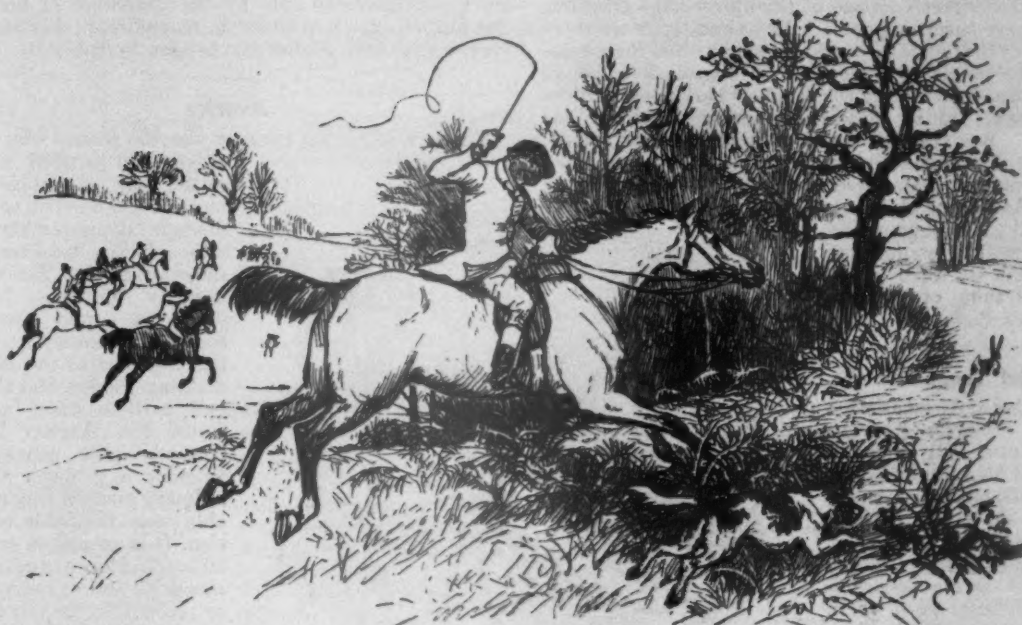
discerning as a novelist of positive achievement is that he did not plunge prematurely into literature but waited until experience had given him ripeness and a background. Of that experience, more varied than comes to most of us because he has been more enterprising than most of us, *The Gate is Open* (HEINEMANN, 10/6) is the partial history. It is partial, not because its author is wedded to reticence, for he is not, but because he has chosen to record only those moments and episodes which have stayed most bright in his memory. Therefore, though his book contains some beautifully-cut cameos of the War, it is concerned for the most part with his earlier wander-years, when "to be young was very heaven," and when just out of his nonage he set forth to journalise in Colombo, wandered thence leisurely to Yokohama, found himself derelict in San Francisco, and, under the tactful compulsion of a wise old shell-back, returned to his homeland in a windjammer by way of the Horn. On that long voyage he encountered a storm of which his description could hardly have been bettered; but equally good is his portraiture of his shipmates—as of others whom he met on his wayfaring—and his detached observation of his own behaviour. His writing, at once solid, precise and limpid, is the writing of one who has the contents of a full mind set in order and proportion.

The Mayor of Swalebridge

There is a pleasant Trollopean flavour about *The Snake in the Grass* (GOLLANCZ, 7/6), though unluckily a provincial career that reaches prosperous ends from small beginnings is bound to shed its more interesting idiosyncrasies as it goes on. *James Follett* starts life as heir to a handloom carpet industry and a social circle of small farmers and tradesmen with whom Chapel is a sign of social contentment as well as spiritual predilection. On becoming his own master he introduces power-looms at the works, exchanges Chapel for Church, and alienates his modest fiancée by proposing to set up as a gentleman. How his flashy enthusiasm—not, as he thinks it, creative but opportunist—carries him from height to height, how he reacts when the material he would remodel for its own good proves recalcitrant, is the core of a quiet, discerning and extremely readable novel which Mr. MARTIN ARMSTRONG has evidently enjoyed writing. One might perhaps have encountered a little more of the



"NO, YOU DON'T GET YOUR PENNY BACK TILL YOU'VE PAID FOR THE DAMAGE YOU'VE DONE."



"WHAT'S IN A NAME?"

Whip. "Wisdom! GET AWAY THERE!! Wisdom!! Wisdom!!! Ugh!—YOU ALWAYS WERE THE BIGGEST FOOL IN THE PACK!"

R. Caldecott, November 18th, 1882.

works and less of The Grange; but the stress is laid where *James* lays it, on the social gains and losses of an energetic but limited intelligence in an old-fashioned but sturdy environment.

Early Anæsthetists

MR. RENÉ FÜLÖP-MILLER, who has written books about reform in India and the Soviet experiments in Russia, has now produced a massive volume called *Triumph Over Pain* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 15/-), in which he traces the long history of those men who have striven to discover the secret of anæsthesia, from the days of alchemists and magicians down to the present day. MESMER, last of the magicians, is here, with PRIESTLEY, who discovered nitrous oxide, DAVY, FARADAY and their successors. It was a hard struggle to overcome the inertia and suspicion of the medical fraternity. Pain and the surgeon's knife were regarded as inseparable. But by slow degrees the innovators won their way—and then began to fight among themselves for recognition and rewards. CRAWFORD LONG, an obscure American doctor, appears to have been the first to perform a painless operation under ether. This was in 1842. Two

years later HORACE WELLS, a dentist, got a fellow practitioner to administer gas to him when extracting a tooth. The operation was successful and WELLS imagined his fortune was made, but when he attempted to give a public demonstration of the new method he failed to give enough gas to produce insensibility. He retired discomfited, but his failure had started WILLIAM MORTON on the right track. It seems tolerably certain that MORTON, of Boston, worked out the first practical method of using ether, but a Dr. JACKSON did his best to rob him of credit. None of the pioneers lived long to enjoy the fruits of their invention. WELLS was given a memorial by Connecticut; Georgia put up a statue to CRAWFORD LONG; MORTON has his monument in Mount Auburn cemetery; JACKSON took to drink and died in a mental hospital. The story of their rather sordid struggle forms the bulk of Mr. FÜLÖP-MILLER's exhaustive treatise.

Man in the Zoo

As a poet LOUIS MACNEICE is easier to enjoy than some others in the public eye, and he seems to find life easier to enjoy than they do. His part of *Letters from Iceland* and

his book about the Hebrides showed that he was not above the commonplace pleasures. In his new book, *Zoo* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 10/6, with illustrations by NANCY SHARP), he is content to be one of the crowd in Regent's Park, or anywhere else for that matter. He Baedekers you round the Zoo, and stops from time to time to fish up some idea that has stuck in his mind. Did you know there is a new theory of evolution in which it is monkeys who are the grown-ups, and men the "little brothers"? Then it is something rather less portentous. "The giraffe, like F. E. Woolley the cricketer, is one of those over-large creatures that yet have surprising grace." Lions and tigers are there to represent the jungle to us, and it occurs to him that representing the jungle in a cage can be almost as frigid an occupation as representing the people in Parliament. In the end he takes us to Whipsnade and a delightful Zoo at Paris. But after all the Zoos kept by AUGUSTUS I. and King NEZAHUALCOYOTL and HAGENBECK at Hamburg and the Americans at Bronx Park and Washington, he leaves us with a comfortable feeling that we have got a very good thing of our own in Regent's Park.

Provincial Tragi-Comedy

The rather ambitious design of *Such Harmony* (CHATTO AND WINDUS, 8/6) seems to have lured Miss SUSAN GOODYEAR a little out of her depth. Not that she is not entirely at home with her heroine, for no sooner is Rachel Hemsley established over a bookshop in the provincial town where her brother is Rector than the destiny of this eligible spinster of forty takes on its proper appeal. It is the Rector and his wife, whose tangled past is so straitly interwoven with Rachel's, that present, you feel, too violent a psychological problem for Miss GOODYEAR's rather academic handling. She is as academic as JANE AUSTEN when it comes to an affair of passion; with the result that the issue between Andrew and Catherine—which for all its moral bearings is really a temperamental one—has a certain air of artifice. There is quite enough of Rachel's own pleasant courtship and of her happy relations with her convincing little niece to render her fortunes well worth following. The trouble perhaps is mainly one of proportion. Miss GOODYEAR has allowed a comparatively primitive subsidiary episode to loom a thought too large in a sympathetic chronicle of manners.

Returning To Our Runyons

The latest book of DAMON RUNYON's stories comes to us without benefit of BENTLEYS; however, it is to Mr. E. C. BENTLEY that the collection of thirteen in *Take It Easy*

(CONSTABLE, 7/6) is dedicated by the publishers, "because he made them RUNYON-conscious." There is little fresh to say now about the RUNYON manner, and it is almost undeniable that the manner is all. It is not unfair to say that the framework, the plot of the average RUNYON story is a machine-made fragment of melodrama; one can be sure that any character casually mentioned in the early part of a story is liable to pop up again for no other reason than to supply a surprise ending; below the admirably comic language in which they are described, RUNYON personages are types, animated only by the clockwork of his plots. But his language is unbeatable, magnificent, charming and very, very funny. Unless you happen to dislike it.

Avarice

The lure of hidden treasure was the reason why Major

Adair had invited a very mixed bag of people to a more or less derelict country-house in Gloucestershire. But although this treasure is of importance in *Policeman's Evidence* (COLLINS, 7/6), it does not supply the main source of interest. Entrusting the first part of the story to Anthony Purdon and the second part to Chief-Inspector Beale, Mr. RUPERT PENNY proceeds quite convincingly to solve a problem that to ordinary mortals may reasonably seem incapable of solution. It is enough to say that although Adair was murdered, nearly all the evidence went to prove that he must have committed suicide. Sometimes when crimes have been staged in locked and sealed rooms the furniture has behaved none too well, but in this case no surprising jump of a dagger from a secret drawer or anything remotely

resembling such a startling event happened. This tale is distinctly a good PENNY.

Family Follies

The Bloody Tower (COLLINS, 7/6) provides two striking examples of Mr. JOHN RHODE's ingenuity. But when it is granted that both the sons of queer Simeon Glaphorne were slain by wonderfully subtle devices, it has to be acknowledged that in some respects this tale does not reach the high RHODE standard. For instance, long before the climax is reached readers far less accomplished in the art of deduction than our old friend Dr. Priestley, can hardly fail to mark down the murderer. And surely Priestley's reputation as a help to the police in time of trouble is so firmly established that a foil as beetle-headed as Appleyard, the local Inspector, is superfluous. Inspector Waghorn, however, adds to his reputation as a sound and human sleuth.



"He says 'SCRAM! YOU DIRTY DOUBLE-CROSSING SKUNK.'"

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Charivaria

Now that a Spanish warship has been seen in the North Sea we understand that the inhabitants of Cromer are taking up bowls.

★ ★ ★

"In the model schools of the future, the pupil's comfort and convenience will be studied," states an educationist. Is anything else going to be taught?

★ ★ ★

The Eye of the Beholder

"... in England during the last eight years they have constructed thousands of houses which are like fields of fresh flowers in the country surrounding the big towns."

Report of speech by M. Reynaud.

★ ★ ★

According to a nature note flies can go for days without settling. Landladies are anxious to match them with a team of selected lodgers.



★ ★ ★

"There are famous actors to-day who can remember having a very thin time at the commencement of their careers," says a writer. Would this be true of Mr. CHARLES LAUGHTON?

★ ★ ★

"Bought Cairn in Memory of His Wife," reads a heading. Her bark or her bite?

★ ★ ★

"A man, alleged to be intoxicated, created a disturbance by trying to pay his income-tax twice," says a report. "Alleged" is good.

★ ★ ★

We understand that there is no truth in the statement that the first shot in the Great War was fired by a Russian named Protopopoff.

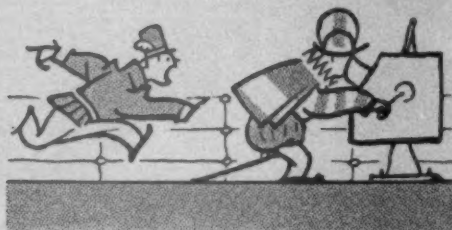
★ ★ ★

Lady Astor Again?

"There is now a stronger belief that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will leave beer alone. . . ."—*Liverpool Post.*

★ ★ ★

"Who coined the expression 'We're all in the same boat?'" we are asked. NOAH, of course.



A gossip-writer tells us he heard sounds like the cooing of a dove on his wireless set the other night. Could it possibly have been Dr. GOEBBELS?

★ ★ ★

Shock for Biologists

"No authenticated case has been known in which sterile parents have transmitted that quality to their offspring."—*Letter to "The Times."*

★ ★ ★

Peanut parties are becoming increasingly popular in social circles. On the other hand they are deprecated by burglars who drop in later and are apt to tread on the shells.

★ ★ ★

And, talking of burglars, a man charged at Epping Police Court confessed to breaking into forty-four houses. He then asked for a remand in order that he might sell the round.

★ ★ ★

"Should I let mere inability to cook prick my conscience?" inquires a housewife. No, provided that the cake can be relied on not to split.

★ ★ ★

A New York restaurant has been named the "Ali Baba." There are only twenty waiters, though.

★ ★ ★

"Mr. Holmes squeezed out thirteen tubes of liquid glue in the manufacture of his masterpiece and stuck to it for four hundred and twenty hours."—*The Croydon Advertiser.*

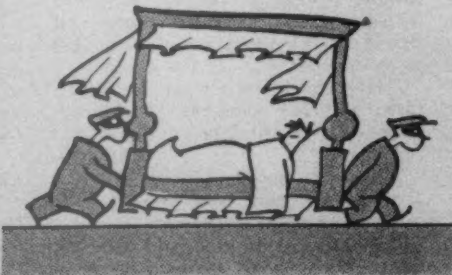
Proving what?

★ ★ ★

According to statistics there are fewer centenarians in this country now than there have been for many years. But there is no cause for alarm; plenty of promising youngsters are coming on nicely.

★ ★ ★

A hygienist points out that if everybody slept with their windows open all the year round our overworked doctors would be able to take things easier. So would our burglars.





"I WALKED ALONG LIKE ONE IN A DREAM."

The Next Move

It was Mrs. Caraway's daily habit to run her eye down the house-agents' advertisements on the back pages of the morning paper. If you asked her (as her family did now and then) why she was always doing this, she would say she was interested in houses, that was all. No, she wasn't thinking that they ought to move; she just liked reading the advertisements. (Actually, although she had certainly come to like it, the taste for reading this particular part of the paper had been forced on her at first by the family's seizure of all the rest of it.)

"This might do for us," she said one morning. "Hampstead. Really comfortable house with large sunny garden . . ." She read the description through. "That sounds rather nice, doesn't it?"

"Mm," said Christopher, his mind at the moment divided between Stam-

ford Bridge and half a grapefruit. "Honestly, this man just *can't* have seen the game. Look here, Mother—can't she prepare them better than this? All she's done is to slit the peel so that the juice runs out."

"This is only her second day, Christopher. I don't think she'd ever seen a grapefruit before."

"Well, she might as well get used to them right away," said Christopher grimly, putting his grapefruit back in the service-lift and ringing the bell. The sounds of washing-up in the kitchen stopped suddenly. There was a long tense silence, then footsteps, and finally the lift gave a jerk and rumbled uncertainly down into the kitchen.

"Heaven knows what'll happen now," said Mrs. Caraway. "Oh, well. What did you think of the house?"

"House?"

"Yes, the one I read out."

"Read it again," said Stephen.

Mrs. Caraway did so.

"Sounds all right," said Christopher, "but as we've only been in

this house six months, what's the point?"

"Oh, nothing," said Mrs. Caraway.

They all returned to their bits of the morning paper.

"Hampstead, did you say?" said Stephen after a time. "Mm, I don't know. Still, there is a garden."

"Well, there is here," said Mr. Caraway.

"What—that heap outside the back-door?"

"But that's all we want," said Christopher. "Just some place for Father to dig in on Sundays."

"If anybody thinks we're going to move to Hampstead," Mr. Caraway began. "By the way, talking of Hampstead, have you heard that England would be quite willing to give the Germans back their—"

"Yes, we have, Father. And it's terribly old."

"I've only just heard it," said Mr. Caraway, annoyed.

"What is it, dear?" said Mrs. Caraway.

"You know," said Stephen—"Germans giving us back Hampstead."

"But, Father, have you only just got hold of that?" said Christopher. "Why, it's got stalagmites on it."

"I wonder if five bedrooms would be enough," said Mrs. Caraway doubtfully.

"Oh, yes," said Stephen. "We could make a summer-house and one of us could sleep in that. Laurence, for instance. If we all pretended to want to he'd do it like a shot. I suppose," he added gloomily, "the little beast will be home again in a few weeks."

"He's *always* coming home," said Christopher.

"You're always *at* home," said his father.

"It says 'convenient for trains,'" said Mrs. Caraway. "Of course you never know what that may mean."

"Probably twenty-five minutes from the station," Christopher said. "But I expect the line goes past the house, so that passengers can easily throw any old bottles and newspapers into the large sunny garden. That would be very convenient for trains."

"I could get an order to view," said Mrs. Caraway thoughtfully, tearing the advertisement out. "Oh dear, was that the crossword? Oh, no."

"This is ridiculous," said Mr. Caraway, putting down the leader-page and taking his glasses off. "We've hardly got the builders out of the house; in fact I still have to step over a lot of buckets and paint-pots to get into the bathroom—"

"I wish you'd step *right* over them," said Christopher, whose bedroom was next to the bathroom.

"—and now you're talking about orders to view. Is this supposed to be a civilised family or—a travelling circus?"

"It certainly isn't a civilised house," said Stephen. "What with giant toadstools growing out of the kitchen walls and—"

"Nonsense!" said Mrs. Caraway.

"I've seen them, Mother. And the hot-water system only works in the middle of the night, to judge by the noise the cistern makes in my bedroom; and as for draughts—"

"You get those anywhere," said his father. "What makes you think we'd get a draughtless house in Hampstead?"

"Anyway we can't move now," said Christopher. "It took me a week to fix the aerial up, and I'm not going up on that roof again to fetch it down."

"Well, it'll be easy enough in the new house," said Stephen. "You just fix it to one of the trees in the garden."

"Listen to him!" said Mr. Caraway. "Talking as if we'd bought the place, and you haven't even seen it. You may as well forget about it from now on."

"I wonder how many maids we'd have to have," mused Mrs. Caraway.

"About three a month is the usual figure," said Christopher. "And if you *will* give them such little time off what can you expect?"

"I give them plenty of evenings off, Christopher," said his mother. "Only you will invite your friends to dinner on those evenings, and I have to ask the maids to change their evening, and they don't like it. It's never my fault they leave."

"The last one left because she heard Father saying she was half-witted," said Christopher. "I suppose that was our fault, was it?"

"She didn't," said Mr. Caraway. "She was so half-witted she couldn't have known the meaning of the word."

"The one before certainly left because of you and Stephen," said Mrs. Caraway.

"What, just because of gooseberry-skins in the wastepaper-basket? I bet that wasn't the real reason. I heard her complaining to the other one that Father swore so much when he was carving she didn't know where to look."

"Oh, well, they leave anyway," said

Stephen. "What I can't understand is, why do they come? I should have thought that one look at the number of stairs in this house—"

"Or at the state of your bedroom," said Mr. Caraway.

"I wonder what 'recently reconstructed' means!" said Mrs. Caraway.

"They've had a lift put in," said Stephen.

"No," said Christopher, "it means they took up some of the basement floor, found there was damp-rot, hurriedly put the floor back and got this advertisement into the paper as soon as they damned well could."

"Well, I think it sounds quite a good house," said Stephen. "How much is it?"

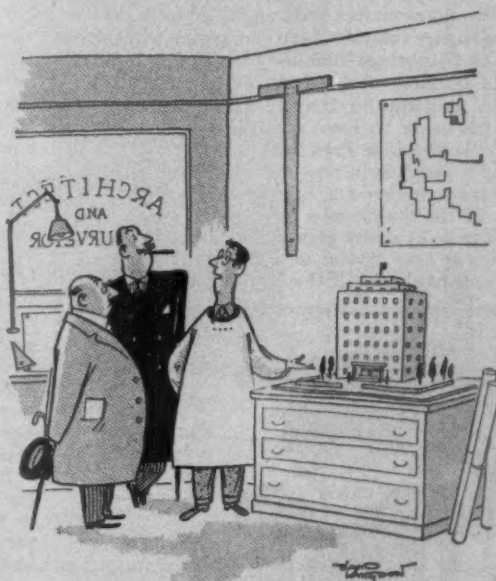
Mrs. Caraway read out the price. There was a short silence.

"Is that in shillings?" said Stephen.

"You can't have got the noughts right, Mother," said Christopher, leaning over to look. "Oh, yes, you have."

Anyway, as they all agreed, it would have been silly to move—and right away to Hampstead too—so soon after getting settled in their present house.

And as houses were Mrs. Caraway's hobby, it was only natural that a day or two later Christopher should have picked up a bus-ticket, punched at Hampstead, which had fallen out of his mother's handbag.



"IT GOES WITHOUT SAYING, GENTLEMEN, THAT THE ACTUAL BLOCK OF FLATS WILL BE LARGER AND BUILT WITH REAL BRICKS AND THINGS."

The Leader

A GREAT name, a proud name for mortal man to bear—
The leader of a people, the guardian of a nation;
A name to carry like a cross and like a crown to wear,
To fill the mind with wonder, the heart with adoration.

A great name, a proud name . . . How fallen to the
ground;

How dimmed its early lustre, how tarnished by the
years . . .

A name to make the light itself grow darker at the sound,
To shake the mind with horror, to move the heart to
tears.

R. F.

A Good Match

DARLING JOAN,—The Front Page is that Estelle's daughter Isobel has got engaged to someone called Charles Fetherstonehaugh in the inner ring of the Stock Exchange, so Estelle is radiant and even the girl seems quite pleased. So clever to find someone with money and a name like that, because one of the distressing features of modern life is that everyone really rich is now invariably called Clank.

It seems they've known each other four years, so not exactly a whirlwind courtship, but this kind of engagement has far more Aplomb than when one falls madly in love at the Woolwich Ball and proposes in the Gymnasium. You know how it is when you are Swept Away by each other and everyone says, Yes, darling, how lovely you're so happy! and then gather together behind locked doors and say, Can we possibly stop it?

I do agree that daughters are worth it when they're brought down in a muslin frock and say some ingenious things and are taken away twenty minutes later; nothing fills in the time between tea and sherry better. It's when they grow up with enormous feet and don't catch on and want careers and then engage themselves to young men who failed in their exams at Cambridge that they become so tedious.

Nobody could be more devoted to children than I am, but I'm always so thankful they're all someone else's, because I do think never to have a son-in-law, or worse, a daughter-in-law, is absolute Paradise.

And marrying a daughter is now a very difficult subject; there are not enough brewers or bankers to go round, and unluckily most of the Guinnesses seem to be girls.

And there's Estelle in a rosy glow about her girl's match; but really have you ever stayed in a stockbroker's house, even the canary stops singing if the Markets aren't just so.



"ONCE UPON A TIME THERE WAS A
TINY-WEENY LITTLE FAIRY . . ."

One year they're living in Wilton Crescent and don't know the difference between fifty and a hundred pounds, believe me, and the next year they're in a quaint little flat with tinned peaches for supper and the telephone cut off and paying the income-tax for the year before. Oh my!

And if there's a thing nobody's daughter should ever marry it's an eldest son with a place, it is one long Retreat from Moscow, if they're terribly lucky and live to 87 they may just pay off the death duties and begin to think of mending the roof. And they always have thousands of daughters and no sons, it is just like Chehov, and eventually they shoot themselves. The one thing they never think of doing is shooting the first five daughters, which I do think is kinder in the end than letting them go through life under a permanent cloud on account of their Irrecoverable social bêtise of not being a boy. You know you see them so often with apologetic faces buying stockings at Mason and Frebody's.

As for the Diplomatic, of course it is full of glamour and glittering embassies, only not so much glitter now with everyone being presidents instead of kings and the Americans not wearing knee-breeches: what a wise decision when you think what most statesmen's legs are like! But anyway it's too dangerous a job now unless you love the smell of gunpowder. The fighting services are as safe as houses, but diplomats are always under fire in Madrid or Shanghai, with none of the kudos, and then sent back to London where their pay drops to nothing and they have to go and live in their mother-in-law's house. Rather galling.

And naturally no one, unless they've a passion for living on three hundred a year in Alverstoke and washing up and having advice from Senior Wives, would marry a sailor or soldier. And the catch about marrying schoolmasters seems to be there can't be enough Young Woodleys to go round all the wives.

As for the Church, it's so disheartening; even if your husband becomes Archbishop you're still only Mrs. Snooks, which to me smacks of Popery; and if he doesn't you have too large a house and not enough to eat and work like a black radiating Sweetness and Light, and no one ever comes to church: it is too thankless. The only ray of light seems to be getting *The Times* for a penny instead of twopence—is it worth it? I had rather marry someone else and pay 2 D.

Doctors are a possibility; they do sometimes make it possible to buy a new fur coat and are much smarter now, what with *The Citadel* and so many of them lords. But of course the telephone rings all night, 2 A.M. being apparently the classic moment to have a baby. And when you feel simply exhausted and must have a day in bed they say, What you need is a good long walk, which they daren't say to anyone else's wife on account of its being bad for trade, which is maddening.

And what I think about lawyers is, Is it safe to marry anyone trained to deceive convincingly? And they will argue with you, and they look silly beyond words in those wigs, and as like as not they are made judges and stop making money and become wildly affected and start saying they don't know what Shirley Temple is, is it one of the City churches? PAH.

No, Joan, I am quite convinced there's only one profession for a son-in-law, and that's owning a large piece of ground in the Middle of a town. Because business is never safe, people may stop eating jam at any moment and take to bloater-paste. And the bottom has dropped clean out of coal-mines, they are all miserable and can only commission their yachts every other year; but people with Town Property, although they roar and scream about Socialists, still have money to Burn, so if you want to be a good Mother, make one of them your Goal.



LA BELLE FRANCE!

"Why, one hardly needs an umbrella this time, Neville."



"A No. 8 SHOE TO CONSULT YOU, MR. MORTIMER."

Lieutenant Holster Gets His

OUR Lieutenant James is normally the Mess Secretary, but during the last fortnight he was away on leave and an understudy had to do the job. Of course the chance was too good for us to miss, as the following extracts from our Mess Complaint Book will show:—

Complaint (11.11.38). Suggested that the Acting Mess Secretary bring formally to the notice of Lieutenant Holster that the undersigned officers consider his behaviour while playing bridge after Mess in the evenings leaves much to be desired. In particular they would like attention directed to his custom of chewing absently at his "hand" while waiting his turn, with the result that several of the cards are badly nibbled by the end of the evening. While it is annoying enough for the other players to find that certain cards in their hands have had their corners masticated, it is even more annoying to suspect that they have perhaps been masticated in

such a manner as to indicate their identity to the masticator.

(Sd.) G. BAYONET, Captain,
and Five Others—exclusive of
Lieutenant Holster.

Complaint ignored.

Complaint (13.11.38). In re our complaint of 11.11.38, it seems that either no representations have been made to Lieutenant Holster, or that, if made, they have been ignored, for the ace of spades was eaten practically down to the spade last night. It is now further suggested that the officer in question be provided each evening with "Soothers, babies'....1" by way of curing him of this distressing habit.

(Sd.) G. BAYONET, Captain,
and Five Others—still exclusive
of Lieut. Holster.

Answer (14.11.38). The Mess Secretary suggests that you all think you're very funny, don't you?

(Sd.) J. HOLSTER,
Acting Mess Secretary.

Complaint (14.11.38). Suggested that in the previous complaint the words

"Soothers, Babies'....1" be amended to "Soothers, Officers', with ribbon..1."

(Sd.) R. SWORDFBOG, Lieut.

Complaint (14.11.38) I concur with the above. This solution would also prevent Lieutenant Holster's usual inept post-mortems after every game, and his usual inane chatter during it. It would further prevent his saying "What? Is it my deal?" prior to every fourth game.

(Sd.) G. BAYONET, Capt.

Answer (15.11.38). Quite unnecessary, thank you.—J. H.

Complaint (16.11.38). Suggested that if "Soothers, Officers'" are considered unnecessary, the trouble may be more deep-seated—or is it deeper-seated?—and that every avenue should be explored (yes, I know) to find something on which Lieut. Holster can exercise his teeth during bridge—particularly those two ugly ones that stick out like a rabbit's. Might not the real trouble be diagnosed as hunger-pangs? Even though we start playing bridge quite soon after Mess one must remember

the quality and quantity of the food which the Acting Mess Secretary sees fit to supply.

(Sd.) R. SWORDFROG, *Lieut.*

Answer (16.11.38). The quality of the food supplied is invariably excellent.—

J. H., *Acting Mess Secretary.*

Complaint (17.11.38). The fish at breakfast this morning was distinctly "off." Please see this does not occur again.

(Sd.) A. HOWITZER, *Lt.-Col.*

Answer (17.11.38). Deeply regretted. This is being looked into at once.

J. H., *Acting Mess Secretary.*

Complaint (17.11.38). Sycophant!—R. S.

Complaint (18.11.38). After to-day's meagre lunch I certainly agree with the diagnosis of Lieut. Holster's trouble as hunger-pangs. I suggest that he be provided in the evenings with one plate of biscuits per rubber—at his own expense. He may prefer them to the club and diamond court cards which seemed to attract him so strongly last night.

(Sd.) G. BAYONET, *Capt.*

Answer (18.11.38). The Mess Secretary points out that the Complaint Book is for reasonable complaints and/or practical suggestions—not for frivolous comments.

J. HOLSTER, *Acting Mess Secretary.*

Complaint (20.11.38). I do not agree that the previous writers' complaints can be called entirely frivolous. As a married officer and therefore a non-dining member I have not actually played bridge with Lieutenant Holster, but I lent him a pencil the week before last, and when I got it back I found the end had apparently been savaged by a starving hyena. Captain Bayonet's suggestion, therefore, seems to me very practical, though perhaps biscuits hardly meet the case. They would not last long enough. I personally would suggest a good tough steak; and in this connection the Acting Mess Secretary could not do better than hunt up the one I was given at lunch two days ago. It should be somewhere about, as after ten minutes' fruitless struggle I threw it out of the dining-room window. It bounced off a fir-tree into the big clump of bracken nearby. A search should soon reveal it, for I cannot imagine that any dog would be misguided enough to tackle it—not even the extraordinary mongrel one is always falling over outside the Mess, which I am told belongs to the Acting Mess Secretary. (Has it really got mange, by the way, or is that just where it rubs

its shoulder daily getting in and out of the Mess dustbin?) And even if a dog has tried that steak, I don't think he will have damaged it much. I now remember my pencil had a rubber on the end of it when lent to Lieut. Holster, but not when returned. In that case the steak should be just the thing for him: it very definitely bounced off the tree. Perhaps it was really a rubber one, solely for shop-window display and included in the Mess order by mistake?

(Sd.) A. SADDLEFLAP, *Major.*

Answer (21.11.38). The Mess Secretary thanks Major Saddleflap for his comments, which in view of the difference in their rank he feels he cannot answer as fully as he would like. And you know, Sir, it isn't mange; he caught his shoulder on a tree while chasing a rabbit.

Complaint (22.11.38). The corners of

both the ace of hearts and the two of clubs went last night.—R. S.

Answer (22.11.38). Three new packs of cards have been issued to the card-room to-day.—J. H.

Complaint (23.11.38). What has happened to the Mess cards? Playing bridge last night I could not recognise one of them. In particular the absence of the two familiar canine tooth-marks on the king of spades led me into an error of play which lost me 15/4 on the evening.

(Sd.) G. BAYONET, *Capt.*

Answer (23.11.38). Action held over. The Mess Secretary returns from leave to-morrow. Thank heaven!—J. H.

(23.11.38). We concur.

(Sd.) A. SADDLEFLAP, *Major,*

and Eleven Others. A. A.



POPULAR MISCONCEPTIONS

BRITISH BUSINESS METHODS

The Debate Continues

LAST Friday we met in order to discuss A.R.P.

Yesterday we met and discussed the affairs of the Nursing Association.

To-night will be the Women's Institute meeting.

This afternoon we met to settle the question of an Open Debate—proposed by Miss Pin, seconded by several people, opposed by old Lady Flagge from the Chair, and amended by Miss Plum, Mr. Cyril Pledge and others, and eventually carried more or less unanimously—to be held in Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green between now and Christmas.

The whole trouble all along has been *what we are to debate about*.

"Something non-controversial," said Mrs. Battlegate firmly. "I must insist upon that," and the General at once remarked that if there was going to be any nonsense about Communism the whole thing, in his opinion, had better be called off instantly.

Aunt Emma said that it was better to have loved at all—but she admitted afterwards that what she had really meant was something about live and let live, only the exact phrase had for the moment escaped her.

"The suggestion—which I'm sure we all feel to be a most admirable one—of having a debate at all originated, I believe, with Miss Pin," said Canon Pramm, looking absolutely straight at poor Miss Pin. "Perhaps she will be good enough to propose a subject?"

Miss Pin, with hardly a second's hesitation, rallied bravely. "That The Pen," she said, "is Mightier than The Sword."

Those of us who clapped at this did so, one felt, mostly from a desire to signify appreciation of a spirited effort.

The Rector said "Yes, yes" in an encouraging sort of voice but without much enthusiasm, and what General Battlegate said was audible only to his immediate neighbours, although most of us could guess at it, especially when Mrs. Battlegate hissed at him between clenched teeth: "H'sh, dear!" and shook her head.

"We have received a suggestion—an excellent suggestion—for the subject of our debate," said Canon Pramm—and something in the way he said it positively defied anybody to contradict him—and, after all, time was getting on. "Now, has anybody any alternative proposal to bring forward?"

One of those silences fell.

And less than two minutes later we found ourselves committed to the Pen *versus* the Sword.

"Hitler," said Aunt Emma with a kind of moan.

"Where, Aunt Emma?"

Aunt Emma explained that Hitler had at once flashed into her mind. She could, she thought, bring him into any speech, whether for or against the proposal. The only thing was, would it be *wise* in view of the international situation?

Uncle Egbert said, No, it wouldn't. One couldn't be too careful in these days.

Laura thought, on the contrary, that

Aunt Emma's words, if judiciously chosen, might do good.

Aunt Emma looked utterly distracted and asked me if I could let her have paper and a pencil to make notes. Fortunately one was able to produce an envelope, and poor Miss Flagge had a pencil of which she said that the lead was all right if it was always held at a special angle and not pressed upon much.

(As a matter of fact Aunt Emma never used it, because she recognised the writing on the envelope and asked what in the world Priscilla was doing at East Grinstead and whether I didn't think that a writing which ran uphill all the way was a sign of a rather irresponsible nature?)

Meanwhile Miss Pin, evidently realising that she might as well be hung for a sheep as a lamb, had declared that Mr. Pancatto, as a writer himself, would be fully prepared to propose the motion, and that General Battlegate no doubt would be equally ready to oppose it.

Miss Dodge, after a good deal of persuasion, agreed to second the General, but added that she hoped she was one of those people who could see two sides to every question. And she was backed by Miss Plum as usual, and by the asthmatic Miss Dodge as well.

Uncle Egbert said that he yielded to no man in his appreciation of our splendid fellows on land or in the Navy, but that personally all this mechanisation seemed to him a mistake.

"Then perhaps," said the Canon, "you would be willing to support the motion?"

And Uncle Egbert at once replied that he liked a good book as well as anybody, and had tried his hand at authorship himself as a young man.

Discussion became so brisk that by the end of the meeting old Lady Flagge had told no fewer than three people that she should expect an apology, and the Rector had had to explain to Mrs. Pledge that if her son Cyril really felt as strongly as she said he did, both about militarism and about modern poetry, it might be better if he went to the pictures on the evening of the debate.

"And above all," said Canon Pramm, "we must all be quite clear that whatever is said in the course of this extremely interesting debate—for extremely interesting I feel sure it will be—*nothing* is to be taken personally."

If Canon Pramm had been a betting man—which naturally one knows that he isn't—Charles says that he would readily have laid him a hundred to one in sovereigns on that. E. M. D.



"AND WHAT, IF YOU'LL PARDON THE CLICHÉ, IS ALL THIS 'ERE'?"

More Clerihews



I regard Zinghis Khan
As rather an over-rated man.
What, after all, could be easier
Than conquering from the Pacific to
Silesia?



No doubt the poet Gray
Was all very well in his way,
But he couldn't write a song
Like "Now We Shan't Be Long."



Geoffrey Chaucer
Took a bath (in a saucer)
In consequence of certain hints
Dropped by the Black Prince.



The Empress Maria Teresa
Had a poodle called Sneezzer
Which severely bit
A Prussian from Tilsit. E. C. B.

Twice Nightly



NO THOROUGHFARE



I LIKE to climb the stairs
Past the little yellow flares
And not stop
Till I reach the very top
And can get that dizzy feeling
Near the ceiling
Of my dear old home from home,
The Hippodrome.
Here a chap
Doesn't clap,
But gives a squeal
Or a piece of orange-peel,
And a fellow likes to beat
With his feet.
Oh, I like to see a sketch or two,
I do,
With a good comedian
If I can,
And a good comedienne
Now and then,
Though I'm fondest far of those
Who affect a reddened nose
And who like to tell their cracks
In slackish slacks
To another man who gags
In baggy bags,
While they each reiterate
What they state
In a very raucous voice
For choice,
So we all of us can hear
And get it clear.
They're so quick and true to life
And their jokes about the wife
And the cheese
Always please.
No, I'm never one to shrink
From quips on drink
That are new to me and neat
And are pleasant to repeat,
Though I never can recall
Them at all.
I like a bit of scenery
With trellis-work and greenery,
Or pillars by a lake
And, provided that they make
It look realistic.

I like the ones who sing
Like anything,
Although anything's alike
Through the mike.
And I never mind how low
They go
Or how high
They are apt to try to fly,
But it's best when they begin
Something nice you can join in,
And when everybody else knows
How it goes.
I like them to get sloppy
And to copy
Famous figures on the screen
I've never seen.
I can stand
An accordion band,
Even when they want to wail
On the trail.
I adore the men who throw
Little women to and fro,
And I've often thought what bliss
Did they miss
Or a juggler lost control
Of a teapot on a pole
On a football on a pin
On his chin.
I was always one for glancing
At dancing,
And I don't mind if they tap
Or slap,
Though I like them best to bash
An apache.
They may do a dance in tails
Or seven veils;
They may have what coloured hair
They care
(I admire it just the same
If it's daffodil or flame);
They may tie themselves in knots
Or have spots;
They can can-can if they can
Or interpret with a fan;
They may do it right or wrong—
I don't care a hang so long
As it's artistic.



DAVID LONDON

Preface to the Sixty-Third Edition

I SHOULD like to take this opportunity of clearing up several misapprehensions that have recently been gaining ground in connection with the origins and interpretation of this work.

It cannot be too strongly emphasised for instance—or perhaps it can—that the little tiny man dealt with in Section II. is not intended to represent Lord Ernest Zootle. I may say that if I had intended to represent Lord Ernest Zootle, to say nothing of Ponto, his well-known personality, not even he himself could have mistaken the result for a representation of anyone else.

The newspapers have, at regular intervals since this book was first published, professed to see in the little tiny man in Section II. all sorts of traits which they declare to be characteristic of Lord Ernest Zootle, and I must say this has been very illuminating to me. I never knew the old boy used to walk downstairs backwards, for one thing, but it seems that this was a habit he retained all his life from the age of one. What a lot of things I—and, I daresay, you—would have failed to know about Lord Ernest Zootle had it not been for the little tiny man in Section II. And what a fat lot of good it does us to know them now!

Oh, the little tiny man in Section Two
(pom, pom)

Oh, the little tiny man in Section Two
(pom, pom)

He may sound like a coyote

When he's startin' up the moty,
But it's ridin' the trail of—

Pardon me.

When the publishers asked me to write a new preface for this edition my first inclination was to refuse. This was partly because I had misheard the request and understood that I was being asked to put St. Pancras Station through an automatic mincer. (I admit that there would have been no sense in this proceeding, but any author will bear me out when I say that there is no sense in quite a number of the requests made by publishers.)

I had another reason for refusing, though, which was that I shrank from the labour necessary to revise all the statistical tables in Part IV. These of course were all drawn up before the passing of the Elliptical Washers (Rejection) Act of 1937, and dealt therefore indiscriminately with both elliptical and circular washers. They still do deal with both, for I have never ceased to shrink from the labour of revision. However, it is quite simple to



"AND LO AND BEHOLD—A WHITE RABBIT."

use the tables provided that their double significance is borne in mind. Let me demonstrate. Suppose you wish to discover the lateral resistance of a 3.5 washer. Consulting the tables at 3.5, what do we find?

Washer	Time	Distance
3.5	4	90"

Key	Fridays only	Remarks
B flat	2,700	Back to garage

This gives us, omitting fractions of a penny, something like 87.2 of silver nitrate content. (It is not necessary

to bother about Sidereal Time.) Now this refers to *both* sorts of washers; but, as any schoolboy knows, all you need do to make the answer apply only to circular washers is to divide the key (given above as B Flat) by two. Thus, the lateral resistance of a 3.5 washer is obviously 8.1126.

Similarly with all the others (except those taken out before April 5, 1929).

A third reason for refusing to write a preface to this edition, now I come to think of it, was my disapproval of this edition. I rather think it was Marie Corelli who declined to allow some book of hers to appear in a sixpenny edition because it was undignified to sell literature at the price of a drink. Beer I fancy was the drink she mentioned. My own reason for objecting is a vague feeling not that it is undignified but



"SPARE A PENNY FOR THE 1930 GUY, SIR."

that the drink, after all, would probably do my potential reader more good.

Returning to those misapprehensions I mentioned to begin with: another that has gained about half a rood of ground, if a rood is what I mean, is that the work has been rewritten for this edition. Nothing of the kind. Here it all is again, boys, word for word. Like Shakespeare, I never blotted a line.

(Did it ever occur to you, by the way, that some of the more cryptic readings in Shakespeare are probably due to his never blotting a line? *Miching mallecho* and some of those others are the result of smears, if you ask me. This of course is what Ben Jonson meant when he said, "Would he had blotted a thousand." Ben Jonson's epitaph of course should really read "OR ARE BEN JONS ON?" and embodies a guarded reference to the prevalent belief that Ben Jons were, as a matter of fact, off. Also the origin of the expression "Oak Hay" is traceable to the legend of the mighty giant who once lived in a forest of oak-trees near what is now Willesden Police Court—where everybody is a wit—and

used to keep a stable of very large horses which he fed on twigs from the oaks. Traceable by me.)

Well, anyway, what with all these misapprehensions and reasons for refusing to write a preface to this edition, I finally did refuse to write one. If you think this is one you're wrong.

*Surbiton—Broadstairs—Surbiton—
Broadstairs—Tahiti—Surbiton—
Broadstairs, November 1938. R. M.*

Gas in the House

(Gas-proof shelters have been provided in the House of Commons.)

THERE have been qualms, as you're aware,
Of troubles hurtling through the air

Which brought for folk like you and me
Instructions known as A.R.P.

Observed by some in full accord,
By others casually ignored.

The members of our Lower House,
Proud centre of a nation's *nous*,

Eager no doubt to set a good
Example, as of course they should,

And zealous maybe each to win
Protection for his private skin,

Have made strong shelters, tight and
proof,
Beneath their high and noble roof.

But is it 'gainst the things that go
Off bang that they seek refuge? No.

And of extinguishers and such
Have they laid in good store! Not
much.

'Tis gas alone from which they shrink;
That's what's remarkable, I think.

For us, in our obscure degrees,
'Twere natural enough; but these,

With their experience, my hat!
They ought to be immune from that.

DUM-DUM.

Letter to My Dog, on His Fifth Birthday

MY DEAR HOUND,—May I once again tender to you my formal congratulations that in the face of a habitual disregard for all the canons of an ordered life you are still with us and in what would appear to be indestructibly rude health? When it is remembered that you maintain this in spite of a perfectly suicidal lack of traffic-sense—you must be the only dog of your generation to have been run over by a perambulator—I suppose we should be doubly thankful.

This year my informal tribute will be a drinking-bowl to replace the one into which the window-cleaner came to ground the other day. I hope you will forgive a certain brusqueness in the large "DOG" which it carries on its side; it was bought at a multiple store where utilitarian considerations must necessarily obscure the finer shades of sensibility.

Looking back over the past year, as is my custom on these occasions, I welcome certain signs of a more adult frame of mind which begin to show themselves here and there in your behaviour. During the last twelve months you have refrained from any of your large-scale frenzies of demolition, your attitude to cats has become noticeably less jingo, and your digestive functions, which will never, I fear, approach silence, are nevertheless under distinctly more efficient control. Let me assure you that these improvements do not come before their time, seeing that by comparison with the human scale you are now thirty-five. That they have come at all is probably because since your last birthday you have undergone the two most sobering experiences which can come to man or dog. I refer to the fact that you have been very much in love and very drunk.

The former revealed in you an emotional laxity which did more credit to your heart than to your head. When you came back from the hound's hostel (where you spent the holidays) fishy-eyed and robbed of all interest in the immediate pleasures of life, inquiries confirmed my suspicion that for the first time you had been properly bowled over. We were all very sorry for you, more especially as she was about to go abroad; but I am bound to say I was a little shocked that it should have taken you nearly two months to regain your appetite and peace of mind in a calmer survey of the facts, which were, I understand, that she was a stout,

woolly creature much bigger than yourself, with a grating voice and an aggressive manner. At the age of three (or, as it were, twenty-one) your inability to face the truth would have been charming; at five it could only be absurd. I had hoped to have armoured you better than this, to have instilled into you a more robust attitude to the thrusts of fate.

As for the other matter, you have learned your lesson and, sordid though it was, it may have been worth it. When you came to the hall-door to meet me, swaying so wildly that even four legs were not enough, I thought it was nothing more than that vulgar seam in your sense of humour uppermost again; but Cousin Jonathan's complaint that his beaker of sherry was empty though untasted corrected that impression. Whatever anyone tells you, never believe the theory held in some quarters that alcohol releases hidden depths of good. In you it does nothing of the sort. For some minutes you lay on your back and giggled shamelessly; then, steering a course like that of a small yacht meeting a monsoon, you just managed to leave the room in time. Later, very feeble, you had to be put to bed, and the next morning you were enveloped in a hang-over which enclosed you so relentlessly that I was obliged to force a prairie oyster down your throat and drag you round the bounds of Hampstead Heath. I feel therefore that your present mood of militant teetotalism is likely to last.

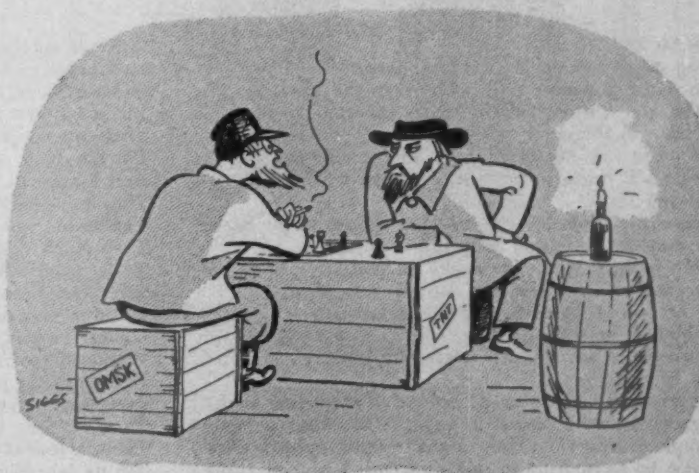
Your disappearing-act of the spring seems also to have had a salutary effect,

for you are no longer so ready to leap into any car with its door open and go straight to sleep. I freely admit the whole affair was as dramatic as even you could wish. One moment I was walking along accompanied by my personal hound, the next I was mysteriously alone. At the same time you must admit it was an error to trespass in a car belonging to a Mr. Potts who proved to be no dog-lover and going to Yarmouth in one. That you happened to be wearing your collar was a miracle to which I look back with astonishment, as Mr. Potts will also look back, I gathered, to his discovery of you snoring inside his London overcoat.

Without clouding the revelry of the day by too close a moral review, there is just one other trait to which I would draw your attention, and that is a tendency to be conventional and intolerant. This was embarrassingly in evidence when Aunt Marian brought her poodle Albert to stay in the winter. Whatever you may say, Albert has a knowledge of the world to which you will never attain, and a mind infinitely more profound than your own. It is not his fault that Aunt Marian clips him as if he were a yew hedge, nor that she declares him to be weak in the chest and so eligible for Wellington boots and a check overcoat. The effect was a little droll, certainly, but that was no excuse for your outrageous lack of the courtesy due to a guest.

If you want to ask in the hounds from next-door for a balley-game this evening, you can have my study on the usual conditions.

ERIC.



"DASH IT!—YOU'VE PINNED MY COMMISSAR FOR HEAVY INDUSTRY."



"IT'S NOT A BIT FUNNY, DEAR—NO ONE'S AMUSED AT ALL."

End of the Round

I LIKE to see
Nothing at all left on the old pear-tree;
In the night a winter gale blew over the town
And the last untidy yellow leaf is down.
Some time in the early Spring,
About when one hears the very first blackbird sing,
Its twigs will begin to be faintly tipped with white—
A cheering sight!
And once the buds have come they refuse to go back;
There may be sleet and hail and a black
Easterly beastly wind for weeks on end,
But sooner or later the sun contrives to send
A ray or two of warmth, and there they are—
Each bud as bright as a star.
For a week or so in April it's really grand:
I want to stand
At the window and watch it, instead of attending to duty;
And everyone who comes in says, "Oh, what a beauty!
Is it apple or pear?" (They ought to know apple is pink.)
"So nice to have fruit in one's garden, I always think!"
It gets quite a bore;
But I think I could look at that blossom for evermore

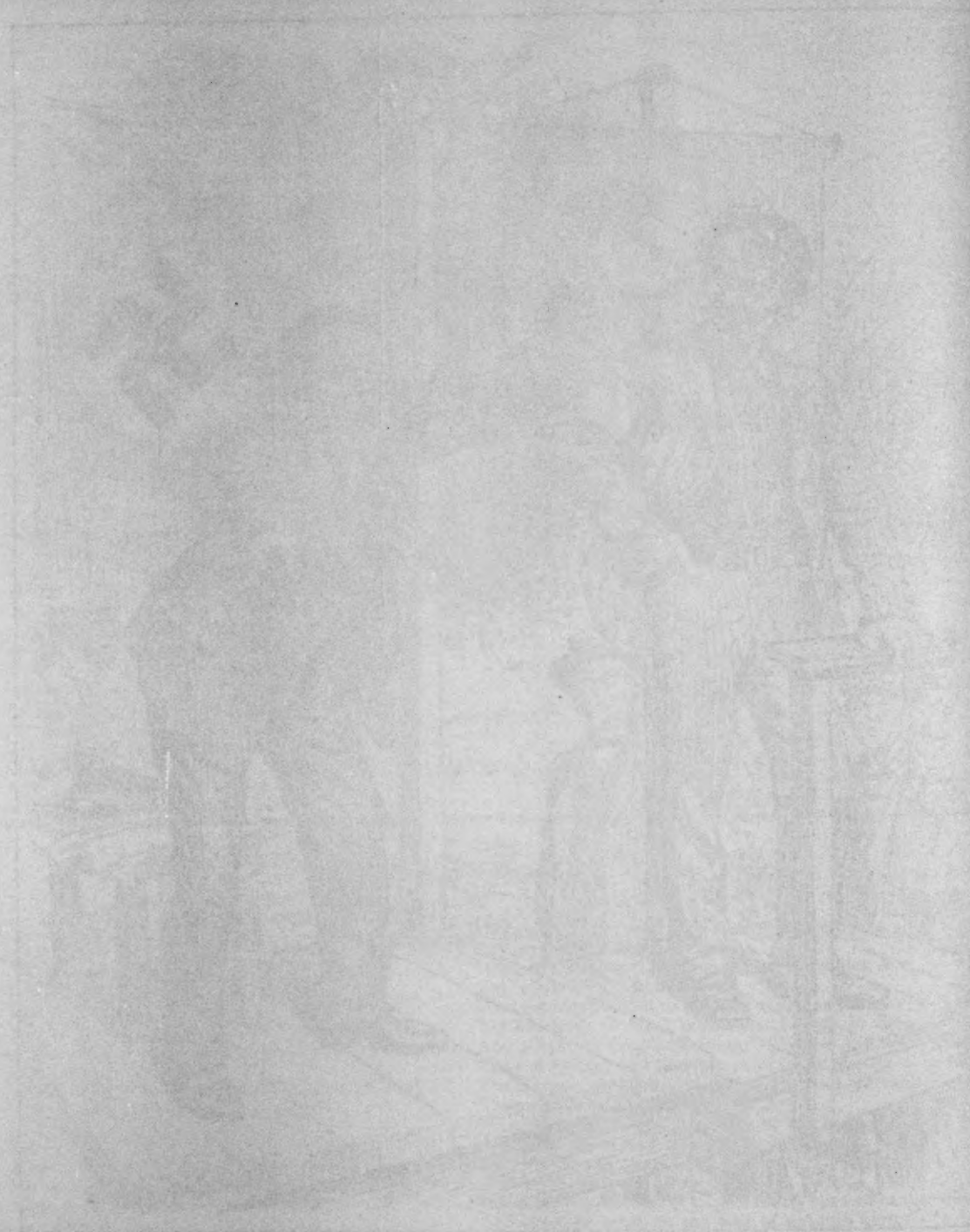
Without getting tired; the staid old tree looks as gay
As a bride on her wedding-day.
It doesn't last long; and soon there is nothing seen
But a billowy pillar of green
That gets deeper and darker and duller as summer days go,
Till hundreds of small brown spots begin to show,
And I have to keep explaining, "They're not much good;
They're as hard and tasteless as so many chunks of wood."
The wasps and the starlings like them, all the same;
They think it a first-rate game
To feast on pears that can only be reached by flying,
And drop them, and leave them lying
Untidily on the ground
Under the tree and all around.
When the pears are all gone, it's nearly the end of the story;
It doesn't do much in the way of autumn glory—
Just some sober splashes of red and gold
To show that the year is old.
Then, a few at a time, the leaves begin to fall,
Till by late November the tree has shed them all.
Now it stands perfectly bare in the cold and rain,
All set to begin again!



STRANGE TUB-FELLOWS

Dr. Goebbels. "The British Empire is one long story of oppression, bloodshed and tyranny!"

Marxist Orator. "Comrade, you take the very words out of my mouth!"



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Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, November 14th.—Commons: Debate on the Address.

Tuesday, November 15th.—Lords: Debate on Spanish Privateers in North Sea.

Commons: Debate on the Address.
Wednesday, November 16th.—Commons: Debates on Road Accidents and Abolition of the Death Penalty.

Monday, November 14th.—Questions ranged widely this afternoon and brought several important statements from Mr. CHAMBERLAIN. In answer to Mr. BRACKEN and Mr. VYVYAN ADAMS he reaffirmed Mr. BALDWIN's promises that no British or British mandated territories would be transferred without the fullest regard being paid to the interests of the populations concerned and without giving the House a full opportunity for discussion.

Asked by Mr. NOEL BAKER to make a statement on events in Germany, he regretted that Press reports of the latest Nazi drive against Jews were substantially correct. A strong protest was being lodged in Berlin against the allegations made in German newspapers that certain Members (the list included Mr. CHURCHILL, Mr. DUFF COOPER and Mr. ATTLEE) were behind the murder of the diplomat in Paris; and the question of finding a home for refugee Jews was being considered by the international commission, of which Lord WINTERTON was Chairman.

The Opposition amendment to the motion for the Address took the form of a complaint that the figures of unemployment were not lower and the social services not more developed. Mr. PETHICK-LAWRENCE, who led the attack, made much of the MINISTER OF HEALTH's remarks that for the sake of rearmament inroads might have to be made on the social services; but Mr. ELLIOT declared that it was intellectual dishonesty of the most disgraceful type to run away from the dilemma, which a Labour speaker, Mr. TOM JOHNSTON, had fairly admitted in the House last week, that rearmament was bound to sap the resources available for social betterment.

In his survey of what the Government were doing Mr. ELLIOT told the House that he and Sir JOHN ANDERSON were working

together on the question of civil evacuation; housing was going on at a great rate, maternal mortality had dropped to a low record, and the new Cancer Bill would make modern treatment available to all.

Criticising our lack of trade organisation, Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN (Con-

WINTERTON's statement that Russia had done no more than offer vague promises to Czecho-Slovakia in the crisis, because of her military weakness. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN admitted that this was at variance with M. LITVINOFF's speech at Geneva, and described how, after two meetings between Lord WINTERTON and the Russian Ambassador, the incident was closed. Lord WINTERTON declined to make any further comment to the House.

Tuesday, November 15th.—In the Upper House Lord STRABLOI raised the legal aspect of General FRANCO's activities in the North Sea, alleging piracy and also an offence by the German Government in giving harbourage to the Spanish cruisers; but the LORD CHANCELLOR, after quoting various authorities, assured him that nothing had occurred which could be called irregular in law.

The Commons enjoys nothing more than a duel on its distaff side, and there was a lively moment this afternoon when Miss WILKINSON, who had been informed by Mr. HORR-BELISHA that twenty-one out of fifty-nine senior commandants of the Auxiliary Territorial Service were titled ladies, protested against so many officers being restricted to a narrow social set, and was warmly engaged by Lady ASTOR. Neither is exactly backward in attack.

Yesterday's debate, continued, branched into a demand from the Opposition, for whom Mr. TOM WILLIAMS spoke first, for land-nationalisation as an essential step towards remedying what they considered the lamentable condition of agriculture. Critics of the Ministry's policy were not lacking on the Government side of the House. Mr. LAMBERT advised Mr. MORRISON to substitute half-a-dozen good Cirencester farmers for some of his officials in Whitehall, and Mr.

MAXWELL described the situation in the barley-growing counties as absolutely disastrous. Mr. MORRISON, however, held that the Labour Party's proposals sounded better than they would prove in practice, and that the Government's aim was to deal with each of the staple commodities on a basis of permanence.

In the evening, after Colonel WEDGWOOD had been driven to the conclusion that the Government were in favour of Fascism and Mr. ALEXANDER had urged that such armament firms as Handley Page and



PAINTING THE COUNTRY RED

MR. TOM WILLIAMS.

servative) put forward some of the arguments contained in his admirable book, *The Middle Way* (which Mr. P.'s R. heartily recommends to those who feel that in order to avoid the twin evils of Fascism and Communism this country will have to make a more concerted effort to raise the minimum standard of living by admitting a more planned economy).

Later in the evening Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON raised the question of Lord



Earl Winterton and Mr. Elliot (to each other). "AWKWARD, ISN'T IT, WHEN THEY TRY TO MAKE ONE EAT ONE'S OWN WORDS!"



"I TAUGHT THEM CHESS THE LAST TIME I WAS HERE BUT THEY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE QUITE GRASPED THE IDEA."

Bristol Aeroplanes were making shameful profits, Sir JOHN SIMON wound up with a bland survey of trade and finance which pointed out how far the cost of the social services went in the distribution of wealth and ended with damning quotations from the writings of Mr. ATTLEE and Sir STAFFORD CRIPPS, which foreshadowed the period of the next Socialist Government as one of crisis and even of temporary dictatorship.

Wednesday, November 16th.—To-day the Lords did not put out to sea.

At Question-time two important announcements were made to the Commons. Sir KINGSLEY WOOD described how a merger company had been formed in Canada which would supply this country with aircraft, delivery beginning next year, and Mr. OLIVER STANLEY told the House that the trade agreement with America would be signed at Washington to-morrow. He added that the agreement between America and Canada would be signed at the same time.

This being a Private Members' day, Mr. WATKINS put forward a motion which was subsequently agreed to, expressing concern at the continued slaughter on the roads. He gave the

following figures, which might well be printed large in every garage:—

Killed during last ten years . . .	70,000
Killed since the War . . .	110,000
Injured during last ten years . . .	2,000,000
Injured since the War . . .	3,250,000

His remedy was a closer restriction



MAPLE FRUIT

SIR KINGSLEY WOOD ANNOUNCED AN AGREEMENT FOR THE MANUFACTURE OF R.A.F. BOMBERS IN CANADA.

of speed. Mr. MACQUISTEN'S was to tear up the railways and build motor-roads along them. Sir REGINALD CLARRY suggested that short films of warning should be included in news-reels, and Mr. NAYLOR that drivers should not be allowed to insure against more than seventy-five or eighty per cent. of their potential liability. (Of the two remedies which Mr. P.'s R. holds to be necessary, only one Member, Sir LOUIS SMITH, suggested that rear-lights should be made compulsory for bicycles, and no one mentioned that fatalities would drop instantly if pedestrians were obliged to cross at the official crossings.) The Minister, Mr. BURGIN, thought speed was not so much the trouble as selfishness, and described the highly successful experiments, based on the use of mobile police, carried out by the Chief Constable of Lancashire.

Mr. VYVYAN ADAMS' motion, urging that the death penalty should be abolished for an experimental five years, was carried by one-hundred-and-fourteen votes to eighty-nine, in spite of the Home Office view, put by Mr. GEOFFREY LLOYD, that abolition must be outright when it came, but that the country was not yet prepared for it.

The Conscientious Merchant and the Revenue Office

A CONSCIENTIOUS Merchant was grieved beyond measure to find one day on checking his books that through a clerical error he had inadvertently deprived the Customs of 3/1½ duty. He immediately raced down to Custom House in a frenzy of mingled fear and zeal and made a clean breast of his horrible offence. On arrival there he was distressed to learn that the sum in question which he tendered there and then in the coin of the realm could not now be accepted and that the matter must take its course. Three years later his peaceful routine was disturbed by the appearance of Two Forbidding Individuals who spent five weeks turning his premises upside-down, examining with microscopical care every document in the place, searching even in the most intimate quarters for papers of an incriminating nature and generally making a thorough nuisance of themselves. During the course of this inquisition several of the female staff fainted and an elderly male became mental and had to be retired. Eventually the Two Forbidding Individuals, who, although pursuing their awful investigations with appropriate severity, were really very courteous and probably quite human at bottom, withdrew as suddenly and silently as they had come, leaving the Conscientious Merchant to draw his own conclusions as to the outcome of this appalling visitation. The Conscientious Merchant not unnaturally now took an exceedingly grave view of the implications and consulted his Solicitor. The Solicitor said

that the Conscientious Merchant was liable only to a fine of £500 or two years' imprisonment with or without hard labour; but that he would see what could be done. The Solicitor wrote, telephoned and called upon the Authorities until he had run up a very nice bill, but was unable to contact anyone with any knowledge of the case. Meanwhile the Conscientious Merchant went in constant fear of arrest, became white-haired with anxiety and sadly neglected his business. After some years the Conscientious Merchant, now reduced to a shadow and with his business in the hands of the Official Receiver, was served with a devastating communication which informed him that the Commissioners of Customs and Excise had ordered legal proceedings to be instituted against him under Section 168 of the Customs Consolidation Act, 1876, for making a false declaration in connection with the Customs entry of certain goods. At this point the Conscientious Merchant had a fatal seizure and was unable to read the remainder of the letter, which said that in all the circumstances of the case, however, under the powers conferred upon them by Section 35 of the Inland Revenue Regulation Act, 1890, as applied by Section 24 of the Excise Transfer Order, 1909, the Commissioners were prepared to stay the proceedings on payment of a penalty of 4/4½, to include the duty underpaid.

Moral: THE MILLS OF THE GODS GRIND SLOWLY BUT THEY GRIND EXCEEDING SMALL.



"COURSE 'E'S LAUGHIN'. 'E KEEPS ON ASKIN' ME TO DO IT."

At the Play

"THE ROBUST INVALID" (APOLLO)

It was an ingenious idea of Mr. MAURICE SACHS to precede an English version of *Le Malade Imaginaire* with a short curtain-raiser in French. This curtain-raiser is by M. SACHA GUITRY. It is a very slight affair, and everything turns on its being played swiftly and easily and on the moment of surprise—for it has a little surprise. It shows us the two sides of a middle-aged Frenchman's life, the two compartments in which he keeps his tenderness. The one is his lady (Miss HÉLÈNE LARA) and the other his son; and we laugh when the son, for whom such preparation in the way of a first-rate little dinner has been made, turns up as a singularly unattractive and unsuccessful youth who has made other plans for his evening. It is deft and easy, but it is unsatisfying fare, and it is with great relief that we turn to see *The Robust Invalid*, a title which itself suggests the rather heavy-footed solid English which admirably suits the loud simple humour of the play.

Mr. BRUCE WINSTON, in the name part, tears many passions to tatters and roars and stamps and is an angry and not just a querulous rich old man. Over and over again his grossness sets up happy laughter in the audience, and the exigencies of a life devoted to taking strong purgatives remains an unfailing source of simple mirth through the evening. Most dramatists find the planning of the entrances and the exits of the characters a difficult part of their craft, but in this context *MOLIÈRE* can always make the audience laugh by whisking *Argan* off the stage in a great hurry.

It is right that such a piece should be played with simple and obvious high spirits. Indeed this very emphatic production also brings out what is often missed—the intellectual excellence of so many of *MOLIÈRE*'s jokes. He had a gift for the parody that is also good criticism, and his campaign against the medical profession achieves its effects by carrying existing absurdities just

a little further till they become riotous nonsense. Thus *Argan* walks up and down the stage repeating the number of steps the physician had told him to take, but saying sadly that the

When Mr. *Badwin* (Mr. KAYE SEELY) brings his impossible son *Thomas* for the hand of the beautiful heroine (Miss CAROLE LYNN), the proud father explains to the prospective father-in-law his son's good points, as that he is "blindly attached to the opinions of the ancients," and that he will "pursue every subject into the furthest recesses of logic." Mr. STUART LATHAM impersonates this *Thomas* admirably, particularly when he recites his long set speeches, mistaking his bride-to-be for her mother. There comes a point, it is true, where the modern actor and producer ought to make it their aim to mitigate the extreme crudity of the construction. Miss DORIS HARE makes a very lively and high-spirited *Toinette*, the maid, but I am not sure that the part should not be made a more elderly one, so that when the maid dresses up as a visiting physician the imposture would have that minimum note of plausibility about it. At the end, on the feigned death-bed, *Belina* (Miss GRIZELDA HERVEY) and *Angelica* both react, to illustrate goodness and badness, in a way that makes the play

more like a tableau or a moral tale than a comedy. It is difficult, for the dramatist gives very little scope, but Miss HERVEY has kept us guessing at the beginning, and it is wholly out of keeping with the high manners and intelligence of the part that her first reaction, when *Argan* shams dead, should be a cackle of pleasure and some gloating with the maid over the good time that now spreads before her.

A great deal of the satire has as much point to-day as when it was written, and none more than the way medical prognostications are accepted by frightened patients as though they were the dooms and decrees of Heaven. Mr. AUSTIN TREVOR impersonates good sense as *Beraldo*, and Miss JOAN GREENWOOD has an excellent little scene as the wilful young daughter making a fool of her egregious papa. But, first and last, the play revolves round Mr. BRUCE WINSTON's *Argan*, which is as it should be, for the essence of *Argan* is that there should be a court to watch him enjoying his ill-health. D. W.



PROPOSAL OF MARRIAGE

Angelica	MISS CAROLE LYNN
Thomas Badwin	MR. STUART LATHAM
Mr. Badwin	MR. KAYE SEELY

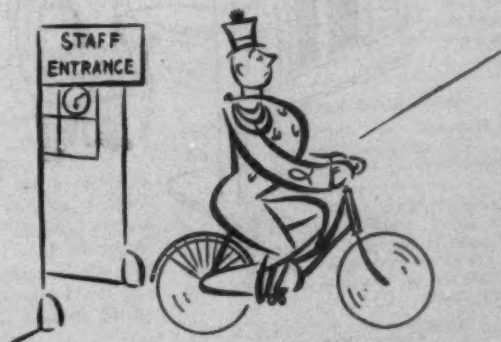
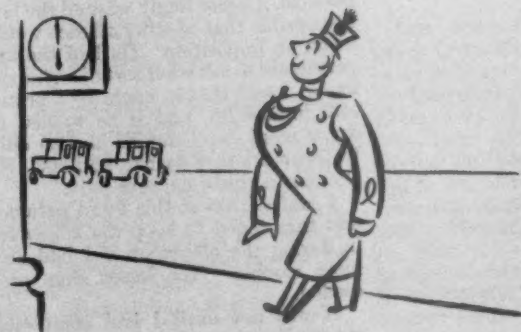
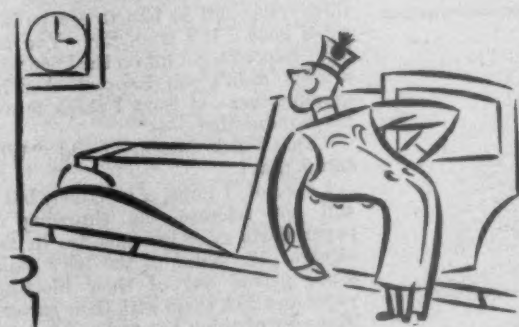
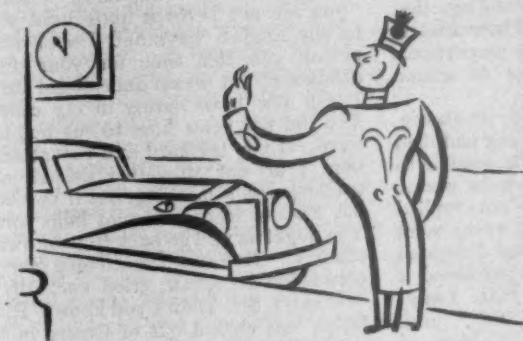
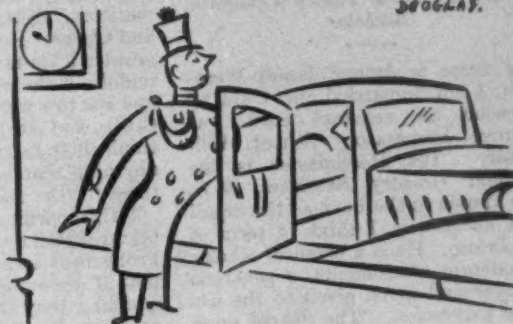
physician had forgotten to tell him in which direction he was to take them.



SAYING THE WRONG THING

Argan	MR. BRUCE WINSTON
Beraldo	MR. AUSTIN TREVOR

DOUGLAS.



The Algebra Case

Statement of Arthur James Wentworth, Bachelor

My name is Arthur James Wentworth, I am unmarried and I am by profession an assistant-master at Burgrove Preparatory School, Wilminster. The Headmaster is the Reverend Gregory Saunders, M.A. He is known to the boys as the Squid—not necessarily, I think, a term of opprobrium. He is a classical scholar of moderate attainments, a generous employer and much given to the use of the expression, "The School must come first, Wentworth." I attach no particular meaning to this remark.

At 11.15 on the morning of Wednesday, November 16th, I entered Classroom 4 for the purpose of instructing Set IIIA in Algebra. There were present Anderson, Atkins, Clarke, Etheridge, Hillman, Hopgood II., Mason, Otterway, Sapoulos, Trench and Williamson. Heathcote, who has, I am told, a boil, was absent. It should be explained that though I have given these names in the alphabetical order in which they appear in the school list, that is not the order in which the boys were sitting on this occasion. It is the custom at Burgrove for boys to sit according to their

position in the previous week's mark-lists. Thus in the front row were seated Etheridge, a most promising mathematician, Hillman, Mason, Otterway and Clarke. Hopgood II., with whose murder I am now charged, was in the middle of the second row. The third and last row was shared by Sapoulos, a Greek, and Atkins, a cretin. I do not think these facts have any bearing on anything that is to follow, but I give them for the sake of completeness.

"This morning," I remarked, taking up my "Hall and Knight," we will do Problems," and I told them at once that if there was any more of that groaning they would do nothing but problems for the next six weeks. It is my experience, as an assistant-master of some years' standing, that if groaning is not checked immediately it may swell to enormous proportions. I make it my business to stamp on it.

Mason, a fair-haired boy with glasses, remarked when the groaning had died down that it would not be possible to do Problems for the next six weeks, and on being asked why not, replied that there were only five weeks more of term. This was true and I decided to make no reply. He then asked if he could have a mark for that. I said, "No, Mason, you may not," and, taking up my book and a piece of chalk, read out, "I am just half as old

as my father and in twenty years I shall be five years older than he was twenty years ago. How old am I?" Atkins promptly replied, "Forty-two." I inquired of him how, unless he was gifted with supernatural powers, he imagined he could produce the answer without troubling to do any working-out. He said, "I saw it in the *Schools Year-book*." This stupid reply caused a great deal of laughter, which I suppressed.

I should have spoken sharply to Atkins, but at this moment I noticed that his neighbour Sapoulos, the Greek boy, appeared to be eating toffee, a practice which is forbidden at Burgrove during school hours. I ordered him to stand up. "Sapoulos," I said, "you are not perhaps quite used yet to our English ways and I shall not punish you this time for your disobedience; but please understand that I will not have eating in my class. You did not come here to eat but to learn. If you try hard and pay attention, I do not altogether despair of teaching you something, but if you do not wish to learn I cannot help you. You might as well go back to your own country." Mason, without being given permission to speak, cried excitedly, "He can't, Sir. Didn't you know? His father was chased out of Greece in a revolution or something. A big man with a black beard chased him for three miles and he had to escape in a small boat. It's true, Sir. You ask him. Sapoulos got hit on the knee with a brick, didn't you, Sappy? And his grandmother—at least I think it was his grandmother—"

"That will do, Mason," I said. "Who threw that?"

I am not, I hope, a martinet, but I will not tolerate the throwing of paper darts or other missiles in my algebra set. Some of the boys make small pellets out of their blotting-paper and flick them with their garters. This sort of thing has to be put down with a firm hand or work becomes impossible. I accordingly warned the boy responsible that another offence would mean an imposition. He had the impertinence to ask what sort of an imposition. I said that it would be a pretty stiff imposition, and if he wished to know more exact details he had only to throw another dart to find out. He thereupon threw another dart.

I confess that at this I lost patience and threatened to keep the whole set in during the afternoon if I had any more trouble. The lesson then proceeded.

It was not until I had completed my working out of the problem on the board that I realised I had worked on



"WHY, FATHER, YOU'VE GOT A NEW HAT—I HARDLY RECOGNISED YOU!"

the assumption—of course ridiculous—that I was *twice* my father's age instead of *half*. This gave the false figure of -90 for my own age. Some boy said "Crikey!" I at once whipped round and demanded to know who had spoken. Otterway suggested that it might have been Hopgood II. talking in his sleep. I was about to reprimand Otterway for impertinence when I realised that the late Hopgood actually was asleep and had in fact, according to Williamson, been asleep since the beginning of the period. Mason said, "He hasn't missed much anyway."

I then threw my "Hall and Knight." It has been suggested that it was intended to hit the late Hopgood II. This is false. I never wake up sleeping boys by throwing books at them, as hundreds of old Burgrove boys will be able to testify. I intended to hit Mason, and it was by a mischance which I shall always regret that Hopgood was struck. I have had, as I told my Headmaster, a great deal to put up with from Mason, and no one who knows the boy blames me for the attempt to do him some physical violence. It is indeed an accepted maxim in the Common Room that physical violence is the only method of dealing with Mason which produces any results; to this the Headmaster some time ago added a rider that the boy be instructed to remove his spectacles before being assaulted. That I forgot to do this must be put down to the natural agitation of a mathematics master caught out in an error. But I blame myself for it.

I do not blame myself for the unfortunate death of Hopgood II. It was an accident. I did all I could for the boy when it was discovered (I think by Etheridge) that life was extinct. I immediately summoned the Headmaster and we talked the matter over. We agreed that concealment was impossible and that I must give a full account of the circumstances to the police. Meanwhile the work of the school was to go on as usual; Hopgood himself would have wished it. The Headmaster added that in any case the School must come first.

I have made this statement after being duly cautioned, of my own free will and in the presence of witnesses. I have read it through three times with considerable pleasure, and am prepared to state on oath that it is a true and full account of the circumstances leading up to the decease of Hopgood II., otherwise known as Stinker. And to this I hereby set my hand.

H. F. E.



SCIENCE

Christmas Cards

THE "Peter Rabbit" Committee, of which Lady BALDWIN is Chairman, is again selling Christmas Cards to help the Invalid Children's Aid Association. These very attractive cards—which afford an excellent opportunity of solving the Christmas Card problem and at the same time helping a most deserving cause (the money raised goes to the Children's Heart Hospital at West Wickham)—cost only 2d. each, and may be obtained from the Hon. ANGELA BARING, Itchen Stoke Manor, Alresford, Hants.

Summing-Up

"In his reply, Dr. Menon said reading rooms served a very useful purpose, especially in villages, where the people were mostly illiterate."—*Madras Paper*.

A Second Longfellow?

"Young poet, 6 ft. 1 in., educated, would like chance to earn publishing fee." *Daily Telegraph, Personal Column*.

"Down in No. 12 on the first landing, red-haired Mrs. Lilian Taylor turns mashed potatoes and fried liver out of pans, carries them between orange curtains to the living-room table. It is dinner for her son John." *Daily Paper*.

But it's hell for the curtains.

Not So Amusing

"I SHALL now be able to find out," said Jillyan, "just what sort of doctor you are. When I first did this ankle in you said I shouldn't want stuff on it, I only wanted a sense of humour; and I had looked so funny falling over. Then when you found I'd hurt it you were sorry; but I don't forget. And now I find I have got a sense of humour, so I suppose I'm well again, and I want to go out this afternoon leaning on someone's arm to prove it. What are you holding my hand for?"

"I am feeling your pulse," I said.

"I sat at this window, very bored and miserable, and suddenly I saw a terribly funny thing, you see. A nice young man walking by, very pleased with himself, in a silk hat and tail-coat, with yellow gloves and a button-hole, and he was wearing brown shoes with it."

"Show me your tongue," I said.

"Oh, presently. I thought that someone should be kind enough to tell him, in case he was just absent-minded, and so I called out very sweetly and

he stopped; and I said as politely as I could that he mustn't go to a wedding like that—even to his own; he couldn't possibly. And I thought he would laugh and thank me and run home again; but he said he wasn't going to a wedding. He wore those shoes to attract attention. So I said, 'Oh, I suppose you are in Parliament, then? I think it very bogus when people are sent there to make flaming speeches, and they try to get noticed in some other way by wearing peculiar hats or comic collars!' And he said, 'I am not in Parliament. I am selling shoe-polish. And this is just a stunt.' So I had noticed exactly what he had wanted me to notice."

"Then you must have felt very silly."

"No. Well, he dressed like that on purpose to prove when he called at houses that it was no good, no matter how well you were dressed, unless your shoes were right, and they could not be right without his polish. And he told me he had been sent down from Oxford and his father had said, 'Go out and work, you young fool!' So he had got this for a start, and he was lucky to have his own clothes, because the others who were doing other roads

had had theirs given them, and they looked dreadful and didn't prove the point at all. They wore black shoes, and the only thing was that they didn't shine; but neither did their hats, and only their trousers did, which made the whole thing ridiculous. And he had thought of the brown shoes himself, to attract the notice of the firm as well as the customers, and he thought by to-morrow he would be promoted. Are you still feeling my pulse?"

"You go on telling me about this boy-friend."

"He was supposed to have a placard round his neck: 'Why Do Stockbrokers Wear Silk Hats?' But he had not done that because he preferred to tell people why at the door, and it was no use wearing them if their shoes were sloppy, and he could supply this City Shine, fourpence a tin, and a cart with bells on it would deliver orders as fast as he could get them; and so I thought I would buy you a tin, because your shoes never look very nice after a bit, you must admit, and you go calling on people."

"My shoes look all right."

"Well, I said he must call again this afternoon and let me know how he got



"THE FACT IS, MY DEAR, WE HAVE BOTH REACHED THE AGE WHEN WE OUGHT TO GROW YOUNGER AS GRACEFULLY AS WE CAN."



"NOW CAN YOU TELL ME WHICH IS THE WAY TO YOUR FAMOUS BUBBLE?"

on, because I was naturally interested, having nothing else to think about all day except wait for a silly old doctor who didn't even know what was the matter with my foot. And when he had gone I thought of something better still—that if you would let me go out in the sun for a few minutes, then, just to prove my sense of humour, no matter what you said, I would pay a few calls with him, wearing my Ascot frock, and what do you think? A dreadful pair of very old grey plimssoles."

"You think you can walk?"

"No, I should have to hold on to his arm, but that would just be it. People

would think we were both off to a wedding—like I thought he was."

"They would think you were coming back, after too much champagne."

"Anyway, we should both be in the wrong shoes, and as we were both good-looking, people would stop and speak to us; and he would do a most enormous trade, and nobody could say I hadn't any sense of—"

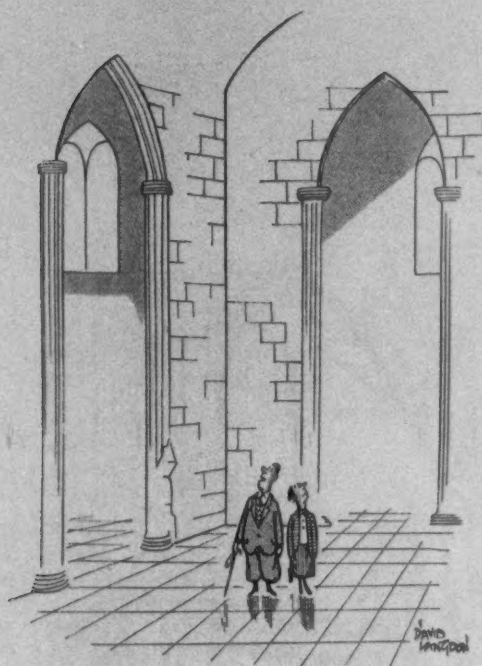
"It will be better for everyone," I said quite stiffly, "if you come out in the beautiful warm sunshine for a nice quiet drive with me. I see there is something rather serious that I shall have to say to you."

"Not about him?"

"I am a fashionable doctor. What are my customers to think if you go from door to door in your Ascot frock and plimssoles, with a placard round your neck, and say I recommend that as the best cure for a swollen ankle—considering you are to be this fashionable doctor's wife?"

"Oh, I was wondering what was the matter with your pulse; I've just been feeling it," said Jillyan. "Aren't you too sweet! You're jealous! That means you've certainly not got a sense of humour!"

"Possibly," I said, "not that sort."



"IT'S EITHER GOOD THIRTEENTH OR BAD FOURTEENTH."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Un Homme Connu

SOUTH of Montélimar—where you buy the nougat that is really made of honey—there lies a France which is not only a *pays* but a state of mind. The one is charmingly described, the other enthusiastically inculcated, in *Provence* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 12/6), with the proviso that the Provencal attitude towards the simultaneous culture of the soil and the intellect is one of the few sound things left in a sick and sorry world. Accordingly Mr. FORD MADDOX FORD grows vegetables, he writes, you know where to find him at his café, he is *un homme connu*. He has nightingales to make up for the starlings of the National Gallery, and a kind portrait of MISTRAL, and a less kind one of DAUDET, to supplement a fine head of CHRISTINA ROSSETTI, and an excellent full-length of FORD MADDOX BROWN. His pages exhibit the "cadence, just wording, toleration, pity and impatience" without which a meditative volume is nothing. (His justification of bull-fighting strikes one as merely perverse.) A French patron of the arts confronted by his illustrator's illustrations remarked guardedly that they were *modernes*. But a book to buy and keep all the same.

Pretty Pictures of the Past

One afternoon, when he was a very little boy, Mr. R. H. MOTTRAM was given, to keep him quiet, a picture-book—or book of gays, in the language of his native Norfolk—and

its contents made an indelible impression on his tender consciousness. Now, after fifty years, the memory of those bright effigies—of the cook, the king, the mill, the battle and the rest—and the comparison of them with the corresponding actualities of his experience, have put him into a mood of reminiscence and rumination which has produced a book. He has called it *An Autobiography with a Difference* (HALL, 12/6), and that is exactly what it is; for its chapters, separate as the "gays" which prompted them and with no logical or chronological sequence, do fuse into the coherent portrait of a boy and youth living in a realisable home in a realisable city, a home which was happy and spacious and secure in a city which was provincial, prosperous and humming with life. The difference between this authentic if unusual autobiography and others of our time is, however, not one of machinery only but of temper. Mr. MOTTRAM himself has crystallised it in a sentence: "There is a complacency, a Christmas-card effect, the book is the work of one who has been undeservedly lucky and who views his life with satisfaction." Well, if such a mood is unfashionable and is the reason why Mr. MOTTRAM's pages are, not dull, but a little lacking in bite, it is a not unpleasant change from bitterness and railing.

A Play-Girl of the West

The spirit which animated the two illustrious Irish cousins throughout their twenty-eight years' partnership is most happily revived in *Sarah's Youth* (LONGMANS, 7/6), by E. E. SOMERVILLE and MARTIN ROSS. Though the period covered in the narrative includes the Great War, the rebellion of Easter 1916 and its tragic sequel, the scene "all on the Irish shore" is laid in one of those fortunate oases in a wilderness of strife and outrage where the friendly relations between the Anglo-Irish landed gentry and their tenants and retainers were never disturbed, thanks to a tradition of tolerance and a common interest in the sport of fox-hunting. We hear nothing of politics or politicians, but we learn a great deal about human nature as revealed in studies of heredity, in most of which the dominant feature is the passion for horses. Hunting is described with the hand of a master—in more senses than one, for Miss SOMERVILLE was for many years M.F.H. Yet the ardours and thrills of the chase are recalled by an artist, not a sporting journalist. *Sarah* reminds us in some ways of another *Sarah*, whom BURNAND once called "Sal Volatile," for she is a wild Irish girl, passionate and tempestuous, the terror of governesses and schoolmistresses, who begins as a tomboy but emerges heart-whole from her calf-love. All this and much more is told with an admixture of sentiment that is never effusive, a psychological insight void of modern



"IS THERE ANYTHING NICK IN IT THIS MORNING?"

clichés, and a curious felicity in the unerring choice of the "sovrain word," whether in dialogue or narrative. *Sarah* and *Timothy Joseph*, the born vet and tamer of horses; *Miss Mary Lorimer*, the genial giantess and Master of the Castle Ower Foxhounds; "Rinka," the ex-circus pony, and "The Count," the great black horse of whom the blacksmith said he could "smell death out of his heels," are all worthy to be hung on the line in the portrait-gallery of Irish types given us in earlier years by the authors of the "R. M."

Composite Record

The siege of the Residency at Lucknow has received much attention from writers both of history and of romance. Legend has grown round the minor as well as the major characters among the garrison. So it has been necessary for Mr. MICHAEL JOYCE to retell the story in detail without adding anything to the numerous partial but first-hand accounts which survive. *Ordeal at Lucknow* (MURRAY, 8/6) is thus the pure distilled essence of many narratives. Of the new sources available the most important is the record of Private METCALFE, who views the scene as one of the rank-and-file. The author has nobly faced a laborious task and carried it to a successful conclusion. Here, so far as is reasonably possible, is written the genuine story of the siege. It would be ungrateful to cavil at a certain loss of vitality necessarily involved by the author's self-effacement, for he has done perfectly what he set out to do. The publishers deliver the work in elegant style and type.

Slices (and Spices) of Life

Miss NORAH HOULT has a predilection for the seamier side of life. Quite a number of her characters are alcoholic or otherwise questionable in their habits—after the manner, for instance, of the lady who finds that *Nine Years is a Long Time* (HEINEMANN, 7/6) in a story which gives its name to a series of stories. But this taste of Miss HOULT's will be justified (except, one may suppose, in the eyes of the unco' guid) by her sense of values, by her complete lack of sentimentality, by her humour and—what after all is what matters most when literature is under consideration—by her artistry. Not that as an artist Miss HOULT is in this book always at the top of her form, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say that she has exercised her skill on matters too trivial or too pointless to be worthy of it. But several of the stories are excellent, with a good plot economically presented, their writing clear-cut, their



PHILOLOGICAL

Bus Conductor (shouting from the Foot-board). "WES'-MINISTER! WES'-MINISTER! WES'-MIN-STER! WEST-MINSTER!"

Accurate Passenger (though in a hurry, he'd borne it for ten minutes, when—). "LOOK HERE, CONDUCTOR! SURELY YOU MUST MEAN 'MINSTER,' WHICH IS A BUILDING, YOU UNDERSTAND,—NOT A CLERGYMAN—OR PASTOR OF ANY—AH—RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION. I IMAGINE WE'RE GOING TO THE PART OF THIS ANCIENT CITY FAMOUS FOR THAT VENERABLE EDIFICE—"

Conductor. "THEN WHA'S THE GOOD O' THE 'W'!"

Charles Keene, November 27th, 1896.

psychology convincing. If some of them have an Irish twist and an Irish tang, that is as acceptable as it is natural; and one is cogently reminded how large a proportion of the best of the literature which we loosely describe as English

has come to us in recent years from that other island which may no longer be called John Bull's.

Why Not a Water-Garden?

Of all gardening virtuosi the water-gardener has hitherto fared worst. Impassioned rockery fans must now be numbered by millions, text-books have multiplied, prices have come down. But when it comes to ponds you still pay six shillings a dozen for marsh marigolds (disguised as *Caltha palustris*); and a chapter or two in Miss JEKYLL's enchanting *Wall and Water Gardens* is the best that can be got by way of instruction. The appearance of Mrs. FRANCES PERRY's *Water Gardening* (COUNTRY LIFE, 15/-) should change all this. An expert and the daughter-in-law of an expert, the author can design and construct anything in the way of an ornamental water, from a lake to an aquarium. She can tell you how to fill it, how to empty it, how to keep it clean, above all how to equip it. One owns to a shade of apprehension over the country that can prefer all these costly toys to a well-stocked kitchen-garden and orchard. But not all Mrs. PERRY's schemes are costly; her enthusiasm is delightfully contagious; and her paragraphs on the culture of every possible moisture-loving plant—especially her account of M. MARLIAC's water-lilies—are a horticultural banquet.

Channel Crossings

Mme. GENEVIÈVE TABOUBIS, French friend of the English, explains for the benefit of English and French alike just why it is that, with the best will in the world on both sides of the Channel to stay friends, there always come times when they are calling ugly names and we are refusing to play. From the hard fact that for France, self-contained within her borders, all other considerations are secondary to security, while for industrial England the economic prosperity of the whole world is of prime importance, there have followed all the misunderstandings, vacillations and downright tiffs that have followed the true comradeship of the years of war. The Rhine for the French is a natural moat beyond which dwell devils, while for the English, says the writer, it is merely a means of access to Central European markets. The fact is that for most people here it is simply a piece of geography sentimentally associated with castles and lorelei; and this misconception is typical of the writer's occasional failure to appreciate the English point of view. Nevertheless her tale of faults on both sides—*Perfidious Albion—Entente Cordiale* (THORNTON BUTTERWORTH, 12/6) is an honest account of Anglo-French relations traced with much knowledge and generally with understanding.



"OF COURSE THE DAILY GLOBE HAS BEEN ANGLING FOR ME FOR A LONG TIME."

Rich Man's Progress

Miss MARGARET KENNEDY has always filled her books with many living moving figures, and though among those in her latest novel, *The Midas Touch* (CASSELL, 8/6), there is none to vie with the members of the immortal Sanger family, *Evan Jones*, the young Welsh adventurer, with his curious nature and gift of charm, is an achievement. That charm can annul the effect of vulgarity, cruelty, materialism and many other drawbacks we all know, and his effect on the lives of men and women whom he meets is credible. Where the book fails a little is that there is hardly a character as to whose fate the reader, however much interested, feels any affectionate anxiety. Even *Rosalie*, the pretty simple girl who is the flower of the flock, is no pathetic *Tessa*. The story has much to do with "Big Business" and with fortune-telling and its effect on persons supposed to be quite definitely hard-boiled, and the title might just as well have been "The Wages of Sin." Though a very interesting book, it is definitely not in the first rank of Miss KENNEDY's novels.

A Poisonous Plant

The novels of Mr. HENRY WADE are usually difficult to classify, and *Released for Death* (CONSTABLE, 7/6) is not an exception to the general rule. Here he has given us a story connected with prison life, in which two convicts play leading parts. One of them, *Jacko*, is from first to last an out-and-out criminal, the other, known to his familiars as *Toddy*, is only criminally weak. After they have served their sentences and have been released from prison, *Jacko* commits a brutal murder and contrives to throw strong suspicion upon *Toddy*. Perhaps Mr. WADE has loaded the dice too heavily against *Toddy*, but this is a mild complaint against what is always an absorbing tale.

Virus

On page 245 of *Antidote to Venom* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 7/6) our old and respected friend, *Chief-Inspector French*, is able after a stern chase to pat himself on the back and to admit that once again "he had upheld the prestige of the Yard." Not for the first time Mr. FREEMAN WILLS CROFTS tells a story in which poison plays an important and destructive part, but on this occasion the problem for his readers is not to discover the criminals but to find out by what means the fatal dose was administered. *French* is at his best in building up a case against two men, with one of whom—though he was not unjustly treated—it is possible to sympathise.

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Charivaria

ACCORDING to an American visitor, the work of many London business men comes to a full stop after lunch. It's not really a full stop—just a coma.

★ ★ ★

"Words were being used about Hitler and things of that kind."

Police Court Report in "The Scotsman."

Come, come. Is this Appeasement?

★ ★ ★

"It is wrong to have the impression that the average Civil Servant sits down all day doing nothing for a high salary," says an official. Is he suggesting that the pay is poor?

★ ★ ★

"Who on earth could object to the modern mother going out and having a good time with her daughter?" demands a modern. Only the daughter.



A burglar who broke into a South London house stole nothing but an umbrella and two books. It is believed locally that he was just getting his own back.

★ ★ ★

"There is only one way to stop yourself worrying about war," declares a political correspondent. Not to worry, of course.

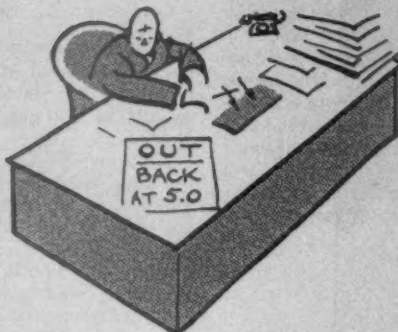
★ ★ ★

Bringing It Home To Them

"Let us, however, express the hope of our own little community that a real way out of the impasse resulting from the clash of rival ideologies may be found and that we may be spared a conflict between the democracies and the totalitarian states, which, if our experience of war is a guide, would fail to settle anything but would inevitably bring civilisation—and Market Rasen with it—to a tottering and painful end."—*Local Paper.*

★ ★ ★

It has been said that HITLER is very fond of bagpipe music. No doubt his favourite tune is "The Cameroons are Coming."



An enthusiastic card-player confesses that the lady who afterwards became his wife was presented to him at a whist-drive. It is not known what was the first prize.

★ ★ ★

A Brushing Bridegroom

"Mrs. —, the 'broom's mother, was dressed in rust marocain."

Provincial Paper.

★ ★ ★

A French artist says he has invented a method of painting that leaves Cubism far behind. There is frank incredulity in Bloomsbury art squares.

★ ★ ★

A gossip-writer suggests a meeting of all those who claim to be descended from GUY FAWKES. Just a little gathering of the old Fawkes at home.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent writes to ask whether Dulwich Hamlet will be playing in modern dress next Saturday.

★ ★ ★

"When the hen drinks," a poultry fancier points out, "she throws back her head and, in effect, has a gargle." And that's how she keeps her pecker up.

★ ★ ★

Another Leakage of Official Information?

"Dr. Malik, Indian member of the Tanganyika Legislative Council, announced that he was permitted by the Governor, Sir Mark Young, to say that he (the Governor) had been authorized by Mr. Malcolm MacDonald to state that the Prime Minister's answer in the House of Commons was to be understood as meaning that his Majesty's Government were not contemplating the transfer of any territories under British administration."—*The Times.*

★ ★ ★

At a recent trade convention a manufacturer of raincoats confessed that he found it hard to keep his products in the public eye. He should try making umbrellas.



The Tram

An Egyptian Interlude

In order to speed up traffic the tram in progressive towns is being replaced by the trolley-bus, and with the idea of increasing the efficiency of our Cairo office there has long existed in my mind a plan for reforming our Monsieur Nessim.

Monsieur Nessim is our correspondence clerk, and it is his duty, as it has been for the last thirty years, to read aloud the Arabic letters and to take down the replies. In the more spacious days of Monsieur Nessim's prime there was apparently no hurry about finishing with the Arabic letters, and as he is something of an Arabic scholar it is his custom to read each letter with the nice discrimination of a connoisseur, pausing to savour to the full the eloquence of some well-turned phrase, or interrupting himself to disparage a sentence which strikes him as descending to the colloquial. This is naturally a slow process and as it is Monsieur Nessim's unshakeable conviction that the best customers are the ones who write the purest Arabic it also takes time to persuade him when the replies are being dictated that such characteristics as solvency and honest intentions must also be considered.

As obstacles to rapid progress, however, these matters are trifles compared with an elaborate and laborious system of numbers and cross-references which Monsieur Nessim insists upon appending to each letter, on the grounds that he learned it thirty years ago in a business efficiency course at the Y.M.C.A. To find the answer to any question by the use of this system is about as practical as taking a short cut to Hampton Court through the Maze; but to Monsieur Nessim it is a rune, the ultimate mystery of his craft, and he clings to it with the tenacity of an elderly enchanter to his Pentagon.

Nevertheless, in the name of progress it is my plan to do away with this system, and one day, when I have been exasperated by a particularly heavy mail, I speak seriously to Monsieur Nessim.

"Écoutez!" I say, "the letters take too much time, and you see how the other clerks are waiting at the door, eager to get on with the day's work. It is not right that in these times there should be so much delay; and the reason for it," I continue sternly, "is your numbering. From to-day, therefore, this numbering must cease."

Monsieur Nessim, however, is not impressed by this invitation to become progressive. He looks at me with the pitying smile of a wizard who has been invited to summon spirits with an electric bell.

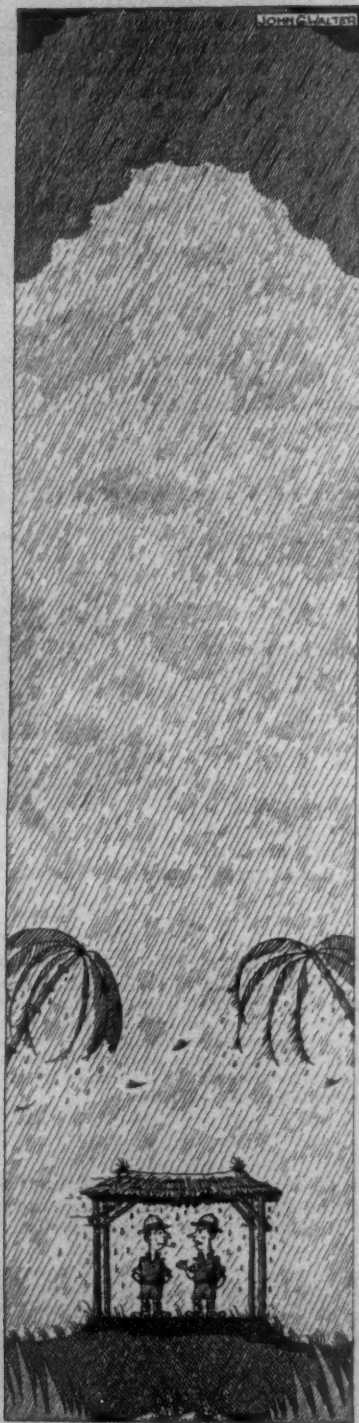
"Mais, Monsieur le directeur," he says with some condescension, "the numbering is necessary. It is efficiency, and without it all is confusion. So I have learned in the Business Course."

And so, I think with indignation, might a tram extol the superiority of travelling on lines.

"It is not efficiency!" I shout, enraged, "it is imbecility, and I will tolerate it no longer! Listen! I will show you a better system—simple and modern."

But in Egypt anger is very catching, and Monsieur Nessim still refuses to move with the times. Instead he turns very pale and his eyes become suddenly dilated.

"This is an insult!" he cries in a trembling voice. "After thirty years in the office I, an old man, am called an imbecile! To the holder of a Diploma in the Business Course such a thing is intolerable. It touches his honour. And with the man who touches my honour I can no longer remain."



"THIS IS FAINTLY REMINISCENT OF THE VICARAGE GARDEN PARTY IN 1932."

Without giving me time to reply Monsieur Nessim sweeps magnificently out of the office.

At first I am rather taken aback. I even toy pusillanimously with the idea of recalling Monsieur Nessim. But I steel my heart. I mutter the words "progress" and "efficiency" and I encourage myself with the thought of a new correspondence clerk, young and amenable, who will do what I say. By the time I have returned to the office after lunch I am feeling quite confident and debonair, like a man who has unexpectedly evoked the Golden Age.

But unfortunately no sooner have I settled down to work than the forces of reaction present themselves in the unexpected form of Madame Nessim and three of her daughters. They are dressed in black and their faces have been whitened as if to depict the ravages of want. Madame Nessim groups her daughters pathetically about her and, having ascertained that their handkerchiefs are drawn and ready for instant use, begins to intercede for her husband. For thirty years, she says in a voice vibrant with emotion, Monsieur Nessim has devoted himself with unswerving loyalty to the service of the firm. During this period he has been a faithful husband—she stifles a sob—an indulgent father—here the three daughters simultaneously hold their handkerchiefs to their eyes—and has brought up a grateful family whose nightly custom it is to mention the name of *Monsieur le directeur* in their prayers. But now—Madame Nessim makes a despairing gesture and her daughters stiffen themselves in preparation for the climax—suddenly, at a blow, this happy picture is dissolved. The breadwinner finds himself brutally dismissed and his children, the innocent little ones—here the three representatives of these innocents weep in unison—are left to beg their bread upon the streets. There is a dramatic pause while Madame Nessim recovers her breath. Monsieur Nessim, she continues,

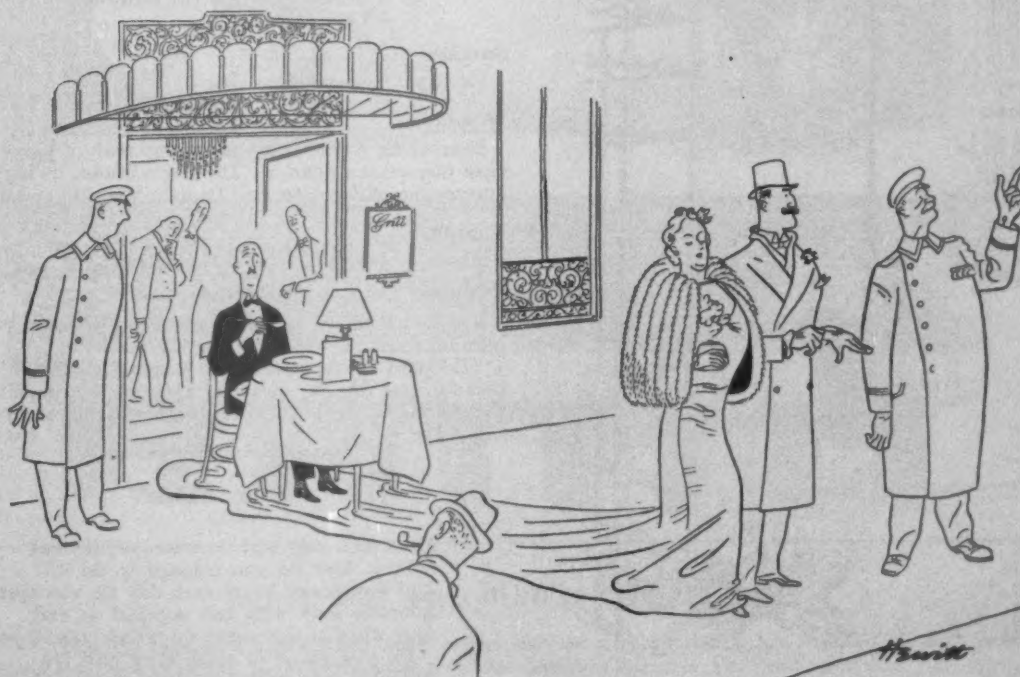
cannot speak for himself. At this very moment he lies on his bed, broken-hearted and prostrate with grief. But she has considered it her duty as a wife and mother to intercede on his behalf and to make this last appeal to the generosity for which *Monsieur le directeur*, in common with all English people, is so well known.

I listen to Madame Nessim in gloomy silence, and as her emotion gathers intensity I gradually dwindle into acquiescent and unprogressive despair. I know that her conclusions are unjust and exaggerated, that her family are in no danger of starvation and that her daughters' spontaneous tears are inspired by that high art which conceals art. But I also know that Monsieur Nessim and his system will be with me again the next morning.

It is perhaps fortunate that trams generally have no wives.

Banal Bridge

"I DIDN'T clear the trumps because my heart
And dummy's little clubs looked good enough,
With distribution 4 and 4, to start
Drawing their high ones on a double ruff.
And if the knave had fallen I'd have been
Safe to have thrown the lead; but as it went
I'm sure that I was right to play the queen.
I thought the Colonel's call of diamonds meant,
Second in hand, a hold of five or six;
One seldom calls a minor suit on less.
And when he trumped the fourth and seventh tricks
I lost my entry on the spade finesse.
But, with a game against, I always feel
It's worth the gamble. Mrs. Smithers' deal."



Something For All

APPEASEMENT

At the end of the famous H. G. Wells broadcast in America an old lady rang up Washington to inquire whether President Roosevelt was really safe.

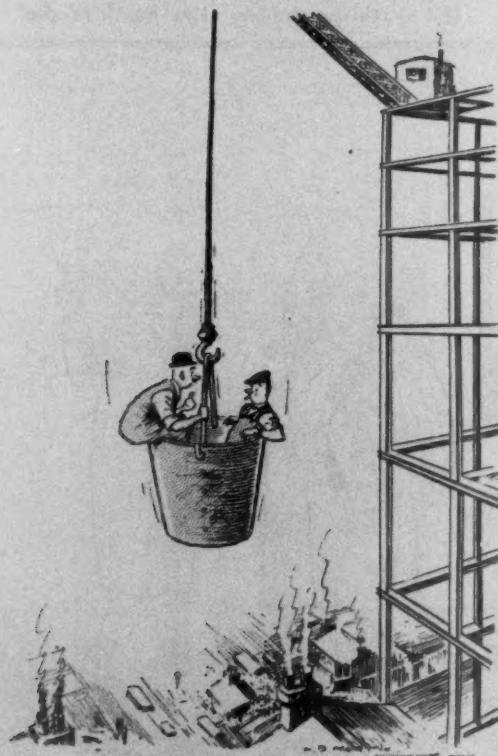
"Oh, yes," said the tired operator; "he came through all right."

"And the poor Martians? Were they much hurt?" she said in an anxious voice.

YOUR HORACE, COPE

If you were born on Wednesday

Do nothing violently on this day. Remember the Golden Mean. *Medio tutissimus ibis* ("The safest ibis is in the middle of the herd"). Generally speaking to-day is good for all readers of these pages and dangerous for all non-readers. The latter, especially if they have grey or brown eyes, and rather dark or noticeably light hair, should avoid complications arising from the conjunction of Gemini with Sagittarius and purchase all our back numbers since the beginning of the year. Many affairs will cause much business correspondence during the middle of this week, but the Post Office will handle the situation with complete efficiency. Those born under Aries or even otherwise should develop their individual personality and read all charity circulars from beginning to end. Keep clear of polecats. Cultivate mushrooms in your cellar and wear pink underclothes.



"BOLTON WANDERERS LET ME DOWN LAST SATURDAY."

Thursday

A great deal of going to and fro may be expected amongst politicians on this day, and the affairs of Asia and Eastern Europe will invite comment, whilst Spain, Africa and Palestine will not pass unnoticed. Alarm, however, will fail to affect confidence, and the wise will purchase freely, especially by mail order, mentioning the name of this paper when they write. There are only 389 days to next Christmas. Serve up yesterday's joint with a garnish of *aubergines* and *passementerie*. This a good day for love and lettuces. Lucky colours: *Rouge et Noir*.

Friday

A risky day on the roads for those who drive carelessly. Caution should be exercised in crossing the streets, especially by those over eighty or under seven years of age. Aristotle's *τὸ μέτρον* should be borne in mind. Diamonds and sables will bring happiness to their owners and chrysanthemums are flowers of good omen; but do not be misled by the offer of oil shares in Alaskan wells promising a dividend of twenty per cent. next year. Money is one of the problems of the moment, but it should not be hoarded avariciously, and your fortune during the next few hours may well turn on your ability to take advantage of the striking and advantageous offer made on page xv. Staff troubles and difficulty with domestic employees may be anticipated by those whose birth date falls to-day, but undue worry will be avoided by all who resolutely resist night-starvation, wash behind the ears, and wear wool next to the skin. Turn off the wireless resolutely to-day. Shop riotously. Fortunate fruits: bananas and tinned pineapple.

Saturday

Maelstrom is

1. The name of a Ruthenian statesman.
2. The name of another Ruthenian statesman.
3. A disease affecting the intestines.
4. A kind of fish.

Sunday

Read the collect for the day.

Monday

Everything points to a sudden outbreak of peace in the most unexpected quarters. These conditions, owing to the intersection of Zoroaster and Capricornus, will endure until

Tuesday

About which the less said the better.

ANSWER TO CORRESPONDENT

I cannot possibly publish these verses of yours with the refrain

"Edouard is my darling, the young Daladier," because the line in question assumes a complete misunderstanding of the ordinary pronunciation of French.

EVOE.

À La Mode

ADORABLE lady with hair scraped on end,

Pray, how do you manage to do it?

And how many hours each day do you spend,

Adorable lady with hair scraped on end,

And what is the secret on which you depend—

Do you pin it or comb it or glue it?

Adorable lady with hair scraped on end,

Pray, how do you manage to do it?



WHAT DID MR. PUNCH SAY IN 1841?

"May the time soon arrive when every prison shall be a palace of the mind—when we shall seek to instruct and cease to punish."—*From the rather sensational Manifesto printed in Mr. Punch's first issue, July 17, 1841.*



"MY DEAR SAUNDERS—WELL HAS IT BEEN CALLED THE CATHEDRAL OF THE DIOCESE OF NATURE!"

The Romance of a Plumber

The Angel Child

DEAR GEORGE,—Apart from disturbing rumours of invasion by Lucys parents all is quiet on the domestic front but last week an occurrence occurred that nearly lost me several friends.

It happened like this. On the Thursday Lucy said oh I saw Maisie to day. Maisie who? I said. Maisie who I used to go to school with she said, I havent seen her since I do not know when, she is just the same except she has gone all continental and enlarged her boundaries somewhat, we are going out on Saturday so I will then leave you at seven pro tem, you neednt look so pleased. I was trying to put a brave face on my woe I said. I thought you wouldnt like being abandoned she said, so I said you would entertain her boy. Charmed I said and thought what ho for a beano so on Friday in the Mitre I said to Sidney Albert and Harry will you come round to morrow at seven fifteen? Lucy will be out and there will be another fellow there so we can recapture the old pre nuptial careless rapture. Not half we wont they said.

So at seven on Sat this Maisie arrived wearing a broad smile with figure to match and said here I am. Really indeed? I said, when is this chap coming? Then a little

fellow about three foot nothing with a face like an international crisis popped out from behind Maisie and said I am him. Why, I said, its a little boy or something similar. Pipe down on the little this kid said. Oh revoor angel child Maisie said, come Lucy let us away.

This is a nice old how do you do I said. How so? this kid said. Well I said, some fellows are coming who expect a convivial evening not a christening party. Fine this kid said, I could do with some gay doggery, being an only child is playing merry hell with me as Im expected to recite things like Im Mummies little curly headed boy, I am her precious treasure and her joy, and similar soft pieces, you know what these Mothers are, even when a fellow is gone six they treat him as a child, may I trouble you for a cigarette? I was about to chide him when the darts club fellows came and said has she gone? Just I said. All clear chaps Sid said, enter with the crates which they did and said who would think light ale could weigh so heavy?

They got in and this kid said hiya boys, pleased to have you meet me, do you mind if I smoke? Personally Harry said I do not mind if you burn right up, who is this infant prodigoddity? A hitch has happened I said, the other fellow proves to be this, how can we amuse him? Albert went on all fours and said Uncle play puffers wivvum? choo choo choo. How very strange this kid said, is he tight or just backward? I caught hold of Alberts arm and said now now Albert remember there is twopence on that bottle and Albert

said so these are the things we are supposed to have more of, well Ill be suchansuched. More than likely this kid said.

Then Sidney smiled at this kid and when he smiles you see two ears like doors either side of a vault and he said how is my little kiddywiddy? Listen Sid this kid said, cut it out. I was only trying Sidney said. Very this kid said. Listen Horrible said Harry, if you were my offspring I would break your unprintable neck. If you were my Father this kid said, death would be a happy release, dont you fellows know experts say us young must be allowed to do what we like when we like how we like where we like, I want to be a grownup so what about a noggin of beer, I am absolutely arid.

Beer? I said, it would kill you. Here Horrible said Harry, kindly accept a crateful with my compliments. No I said, no child drinks beer in my house, not at its present price, if we play pontoon this kid can watch. No he said. No what? I said. No perishing fear he said. Let him play Sidney said, I will teach him the rudiments as though I says it as shouldnt I play a very fair game of pontoon. There was nearly mortal combat because Harry said yes if someone keeps an eye on you but we finally started and this kid produced sixpence and said this is my all, if and when I lose it I will scream the place down, I trust gentlemen that that will not be necessary.

We let him win for a bit and he said coo this isnt bad, two hundred percent profit in twenty minutes, why wasnt I taught this at school instead of my twice twos and ten sixty sixes, the bank is mine gentlemen, double stakes please. Well George this kid kept raking the bobs in right and left until finally he had to sit on a cushion so as to see over his winnings. At ten I said I am broke and Sidney said me too. If someone will inform me the regulation way for gamblers to leave this world of sorrow Albert said, I will have much pleasure in doing so and Harry said I would throw myself in the river but am now so weak I could never lift myself.

Borrow from me this kid said so we all borrowed but to no avail and at eleven this kid said well you all seem to be cleaned out and Im not prepared to give further credit so there seems no point in my staying. What are your winnings? I said. Two pounds two all told he said, I feel drunk with power and quite a grownup, I advise prompt settlement of your I owe yous as I charge twenty percent interest per day, good night all.

If only it was Xmas Harry said, I would descend that kids chimney and take his ill gotten gains and leave a note saying its time you kids gave me something, signed S. Claus. Look Sidney said, I move we recoup ourselves from the darts club accident fund, it means our members will have to bear charmed lives for many a day but this is certainly a very terrible accident. Carried unanimous we said. Then they went and said thanks for a pleasant evening we dont think and Harry said quoth the raven never no more.

Maisie came back with Lucy and said where is my little precious? Home I said, icy. Such a sweet child Lucy said. Quite sickly I said and then said the old hypocritical good night and went in. Alone with Lucy I said oh for shame Lucy, why let me think Maisies boy was a fellow and she said well I knew youd refuse if I told you the truth. Be that as it may I said, my friends have now turned sour on me and then I told her all that had befallen. You men she said, you would of robbed that child of every penny if you could of, you must learn to take your medicine, however I will see what I can do, good night William.

Well George next day I saw Sidney and he said William the accident fund is okay again thanks to Lucys suggestion. Kindly unfold I said. Well he said, she called this morning

and said look Sidney, if this child wants to feel grown up let him, so on her suggestion I held a very extraordinary general meeting of the darts club and elected him vice president for life with a heavy accent on the vice. I am now on my way to inform him of this high honour and collect his subscription Sidney said, it is of course two guineas.

Well George there is one great blessing about other peoples children, they can never be yours can they? I hope you are well and am

Your affect friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

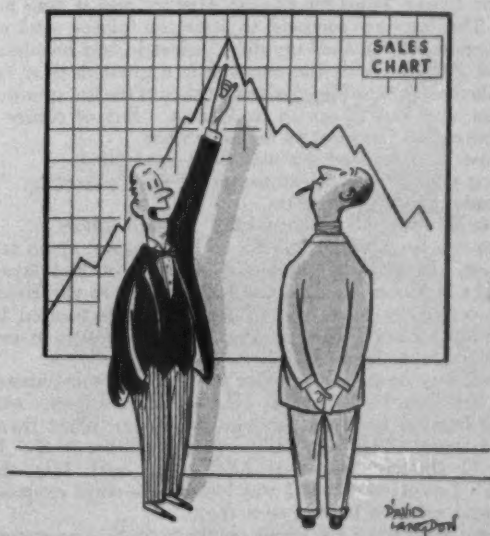
P.S.—Being married is supposed to make you happy as the day is long but sometimes George I cant help noticing how the days are drawing in.

Luck

At times when smoking by my lonely fire
I muse upon the accidents of life
And, while the incense rises from my briar,
Count my escapes, I think of Jones's wife.

'Twas in a teashop Jones and I espied her.
Ardent were we and eager to adore,
So when she dropped a coin we stooped beside her
And fumbled for her florin on the floor.

Then was I shamed; but now I realise—
Since I've been told he's not allowed to smoke
Save in the tool-shed—that the gods are wise
And smiled upon me when my braces broke.



"... AND DID WE YODEL WHEN WE GOT UP THERE!"

Should Assistant Masters Throw Books?

My friend Arthur James Wentworth, who was recently charged with the murder of a certain Hopgood II, of Burgrove Preparatory School, Wilminster (Headmaster, the Reverend Gregory Saunders, M.A. Gravel soil. Boys prepared for Common Entrance and the Royal Navy), by striking him on the head with a missile, to wit a Hall and Knight's *Algebra*, has been greatly upset by the popular reaction to this mischance. He considers it most unfair that more emphasis has not been laid on the fact that the book was not discharged at Hopgood II. (who was asleep at the time), but at Mason, a boy of ungovernable insolence. But what hurts him most is the assertion, made by several irresponsible persons, that in no circumstances is a master justified in throwing books, etc., at his boys. This monstrous misconception he wishes to have cleared up at once, in the interests, as he says, of the whole teaching profession, and he has accordingly entrusted me with the publication of certain notebooks, diaries and so on compiled during his seven years at Burgrove. From a considerable body of writing I shall endeavour to select only such material as throws light on the forces militating against the composure and, indeed, the sanity of assistant masters, and in particular on the conduct of Set IIIA and the boy Mason.

* * * * *

Extract from the Diary of A. J. Wentworth

Monday. This has been an unsatisfactory day. When I entered Classroom 4 after Break I found the whole class clustered round my desk and immediately ordered them sharply to go to their places and open their books. "Didn't you hear the bell?" I cried. "It went two minutes ago." Some of the boys turned round as I spoke, and I saw to my surprise that they were not IIIA, as I had expected, but the Upper Fourth, and that the Headmaster was seated at the desk correcting their exercises. I am not at all convinced that it is a wise practice to call all the boys up when one is correcting. I have tried it myself with IIIA and also with the Lower Third for English History and it does not work. The boys are inclined to jostle for places, and on one occasion IIIA pushed my desk, through over-keenness, right off its dais, with the result that a great deal of ink was spilled and Etheridge, the best worker of the lot, sprained his wrist and had to go up to Matron. But of course a headmaster has the right to do as he likes.

As soon as I realised my mistake I apologised.

"I beg your pardon, Headmaster," I said, colouring. "I was thinking it was Monday."

"It is Monday, Mr. Wentworth," he said kindly.

There was no more to be said, so I apologised again and withdrew. I should have remembered that on Mondays I take IIIA in Room 6, since the Library, where the Headmaster ordinarily takes the Upper Fourth, is wanted by Miss Childs for her Music now that the Music Room is used for P.T. on wet days.

On my way down the corridor to Room 6 I remembered that I had forgotten to bring IIIA's corrected books with me and hurried back to the Common Room to get them. There I found Gilbert smoking a pipe. "Hullo, A. J.," he said. "I thought you were having fun with IIIA this period." I explained that I was looking for some exercise-books and asked if he had seen them.

"There were some old books on the table this morning," he said; "but I burnt those. I thought they were finished with."

I was nearly taken in for a moment, but I know C. G. of

old. "You're pulling my leg, C. G.," I said, doubling up my fists in pretended anger; and sure enough soon found my books at the back of my locker.

This incident delayed me still further, and in my haste to get to work I inadvertently returned to Room 4 instead of Room 6. Not wishing, naturally, to disturb the Headmaster a second time, I closed the door again as quietly as I could the moment I heard his voice conjugating the imperfect subjunctive passive of "audio," but even so could not help hearing him say, "See who that was, Briggs." I now made what proved to be the fatal mistake of running into the boot-room. This little room, in which, as the name implies, the boys keep their boots and shoes, lies on the right of a narrow passage running off the main corridor almost opposite Classroom 4, and it was natural that it should come into my mind, since the main corridor itself continues for a considerable distance on either side of Room 4 without offering concealment of any kind.

Time and again I have warned the school boot-boy not to leave the large basket, in which he collects the soiled shoes for cleaning, in the middle of the boot-room floor. It is an unnecessary obstruction, and what is more I have known boys turn it upside-down and hide under it when I have been marshalling them for a Sunday afternoon walk. But the boot-boy has, I am afraid, about as much sense as Atkins, who is easily the stupidest of my IIIA boys. I fell over, and indeed into, this basket with a considerable noise, and in so doing lost hold of my exercise-books, which flew all over the room. I was still in this ludicrous position, striving to free my gown which had caught in the wicker-work, when Briggs put his head round the door, said "Golly!" and disappeared again, no doubt to report what he had seen to the Headmaster.

It can be imagined that I was in no mood after this to stand any nonsense from anybody, and IIIA found that they had a very different person to deal with this morning from their usual good-natured master. I kept Anderson standing up for twenty minutes and gave Mason the shock of his life by setting him fifty lines for singing. A little severity now and then does them no harm at all.

The Headmaster sent for me after lunch and was very decent about it, though obviously displeased.

"I understand, Wentworth," he said, "that you were seen sitting in a basket in the boot-room this morning at a time when you should have been supervising the work of one of your mathematical sets?"

I nodded my head and said eagerly that I could explain.

He said, "No explanation is necessary. I do not make it my business, as you know, to pry into the affairs of my masters. I trust you all implicitly. But I must make it clear that I cannot allow any master to fritter away, in the boot-room or anywhere else, time which should be devoted to the instruction of my boys. That is what we are all here for—to teach."

I told him that I was extremely sorry for what had occurred, and added that I was prepared, if he wished it, to give an undertaking never to enter the boot-room again. He replied that he did not wish it, that he hoped I had enough self-control to make such an undertaking unnecessary, and that he had no objection whatever to my going into the boot-room whenever I wished provided that neither the work of the boys nor the dignity of my position was endangered by my presence there. He then said that the School must come first, and I realised that the interview was at an end.

On my way back to the Common Room I met Mason and let him off his imposition. It had worried me to think that I might perhaps have let a momentary irritation override my sense of fair play.

H. F. E.

More Clerihews



"Dinner-time?" said Gilbert White,
 "Yes, yes—certainly—all right.
 Just let me finish this note
 About the Lesser White-bellied Stroat."



Rupert of the Rhine
 Thought Cromwell was a swine,
 And he felt quite sure
 After Marston Moor.



It was a rule of Leonardo da Vinci's
 Not to put his trust in princes.
 Pleading was of no avail;
 They had to pay up on the nail.



The meaning of the poet Gay
 Was always as clear as day,
 While that of the poet Blake
 Was often practically opaque. E. C. B.

Mr. Mafferty Burns His Pipes



"ORANGE-JUICE," mused Mr. Mafferty. "Nothin' but orange-juice. A great bucket of orange-juice every three hours, an' nothin' besides to eat or drink exceptin' a small dish of stewed fruit at the fall of night. An' no smokin' neither. That's what they did to me, mister, for five long days. An' I'm alive to tell the tale.

"But it's a fine thing, surely, if a man survives, for all the ills of the body, which, accordin' to the modern doctor, is mistress of the mind itself. There's nothin' a man does now will not be plantin' poisons in him, if it's eatin' a rump-steak or a fried plaice, or drinkin' a pint of bitter, or smokin' the first quarter of a bijou cigar. Man, they tell me, is a walkin' museum of poisons, no more. Not even milk, they say, is a safe bet always. I wouldn't wonder if there's some sort of a toxin in the crossword puzzle, an' bad bacteria in the football pools.

"There's only one thing, it seems, is free of toxins an' bacteria, an' that's the blessed juice of the orange. So it's a fine superior sensation for a man to lie in his bed an' think of humanity continually intoxicatin' the cosmic system, an' himself a purer an' a nobler creature every minute of the day. The first day, surely, the mind's rebellious an' cloudy, an' you wonder if a life preserved by orange-juice is a life worth preservin' at all. By the second day the clouds have shifted, there's a kind of a golden glow in the mind, like a sunset across the water in the month of October, or the peaceful endin' of a wood-fire in the winter-time. By the third day you'd think a man would be ravin' for sausages an' clamourin' for chops an' steaks. But that's not the truth of it: and why would I tell you a lie? By the third day there's no more hunger in him at all, only a sad kind of pity for the common run of humanity, an' they poisonin' their persons with protein an' carbohydrates. By the fourth day he's an animated orange, no less, with

the warm suns of Spain in his complexion, an' the golden juices in his blood, an' good fine orange resolutions in his soul. An' then, says the doctor, he can have a boiled egg, with spinach.

"Resolutions, I'm tellin' you. So you see me now convalescent, suckin' bull's-eye peppermints, an' burnin' me tobacco pipes. Me darlin' dirty, deadly tobacco pipes! It's a grand thought, Mr. Heather, to think I'll never be smokin' a pipe again. It's two years now since I gave up smokin' for good the last time. That held for five days; an' the time before it ran for a whole week, no less. But look at me to-day! Twenty-one days it is since I held a pipe between me teeth. Twenty-one days! It's a record. It's the longest three weeks in the world. But the worst is over now, I'm tellin' you. Never again!

"Throw that filthy fellow in the fire for me, Mr. Heather. How many's that, now? Thirty-six? An' a regiment more to come. Look at this one, now, choked with lava like the inside of Vesuvius. Let him burn—no, wait a while. That's an old favourite; I remember it well. I remember me fond wife bought that for me birthday the year of the King's Jubilee. A beautiful pipe it was, an' costly. It was smooth an' shiny an' dark-complexioned, like the back of a rickshaw runner in Colombo at the noon of day. It had two magical blue spots on the mouthpiece, the way you'd know it was expensive an' sanitary. Inside it had a queer hygienic contraption of aluminium to keep the poisonin' within reasonable limits; but it made the smokin' difficult, an' I threw it away the first day. An' it had a fine soft cover of chamois-leather to keep the bowl from scratchin's and woundin's. That went the second day. But it was a darlin' pipe without the trimmin's, me pride an' solace, an' a thing of beauty besides. Many's the happy hours I owe to that feller, sittin' in the sunshine readin' the mur-

DAVID LANGDON



ders after breakfast, or sittin' over a coal-fire readin' the murders in the evenin'. Many's the perplexities an' troubles that pipe has eased an' comforted. Many's the great thoughts, an' pieces of poetry, an' noble plans, an' eloquent orations that dirty darlin' has brought to birth. Many's the sad anxieties I've suffered through losin' him, an' meself a kind of a widow till he was found again. Once I left him on the roof of St. Paul's, an' once in the Turkish bath; twice he's gone overboard in London River an' I've had to lower a boat to save him, racin' seaward on the strong tide.

"The darlin'! But look at him now. Sure it's a sad insanitary spectacle he is. His bowl is chipped an' cracked, an' no more polish at all; an' the inside is so congested with the lava of the years a small nun couldn't poke her little finger inside it. The whole thing's saturated with the dangerous juices, an' the mouthpiece is bitten through an' crushed by me powerful jaws the way it'd be a hard thing for a whiff of smoke to fight its way out at all. Ah, it's a mournful sight!

"An' it's the world's wonder, Mr. Heather, to see you sittin' there with a sad and similar object between your teeth. Not a Jubilee pipe, I judge, but maybe datin' from the Abdication. Am I right? I wonder at you. Don't you think shame of yourself to be carryin' an antique drain about in your mouth, an' burnin' vegetable matter under your own nose, ruinin' your fine eyes an' nervous system with a baneful acid, bringin' down your blood-pressure to the level of a lizard, an' marchin' through the public streets puffin' poison at the people? Isn't it envious you are to look at the like of myself, a free man, has thrown off the shackles of tobacco? Glory be! it's fit I'm feelin'! Frantic—but fit. Suicidal—but fit. I can't think, I can't concentrate; there's hunger in me veins; but notwithstandin', I'm a fit feller. Me mind refuses duty, but me body's beautiful. Fit? I could bite your ear off—an' for two pins I would. Bring me the first five hundred omnibuses of the London Passenger Transport Board an' I'll push them over, one after the other. Fit? The one thing troubles me is the fear of spiritual pride an' moral insufferability, for after three weeks only me soul's near burstin' with enjoyable disdain at the sight of you fumigatin' yourself to death; an' how will I be after a year or less!

"Never again! An' there's another thing. It's not the poisons only but the work an' worry. Cigarettes is insidious, cigars is expensive, but pipes



"SEEN THE PAPER THIS MORNING?"

is hard labour. Indade, it's a great wonder that Mr. Baldwin had the time to be Prime Minister an' smoke a pipe as well. Let you count now the number of articles you have to carry on you, an' you walkin' the world. Two pipes—or maybe three; an' a fat tobacco-pouch; an' two boxes of matches, if you're a prudent man; an' a few pipe-cleaners if you're wise; an' maybe a small knife or fancy gadget for excavatin' the lava an' removin' obstructions to the flow of poison. Every time you change your clothes you have to shift your cargo, an' life's a misery if you forget. There's ugly bulges on your hips is ruination to your new suit an' a continual sadness to your fond wife. An' when you dress for the evenin' there's nowhere to stow your

cargo exceptin' in your tails only, an' they unsuitable. Faith, it's glad I am to be free of all this toil an' torment! An' by the way, it's rich I'll be with no tobacco-bill, nor doctor's neither. Throw them in, then, Mr. Heather—let 'em burn, let 'em burn!

"No, not the veteran, not me Jubilee darlin'! We'll keep him, surely, for a sad memorial an' a warnin' to the young people. Besides, they do say there's some kind of a herbal mixture a man can burn, with no poison at all to speak of, the way he can sit in the dark city with the soothin' scent of the countryside in his nostrils, like the end of a bonfire of dead leaves on a wet night in the fall of the year. We might try that."

A. P. H.

At the Pictures

WINGS AND NO WINGS

THERE are several good ideas in *Men With Wings*, but they don't seem to me to have come out right. It was good to trace the development of the two sides of the history of flying by telling the story of two friends, each personifying one: *Patrick Falconer* (FRED MACMURRAY), the spectacular adventurer, and *Scott Barnes* (RAY MILLAND), the research engineer and designer. It was good to have a local newspaper editor (PORTER HALL), who, though naturally more interested in the exploits of *Pat*, was always in a position to be told first by his assistant (LYNNE OVERMAN) of the less picturesque but more worthy exploits of other people. It was good to do the film in Technicolor: there is some most impressive photography. But I am far from happy about the result.

Not for a long time have I seen a picture in which it was so easy to anticipate the next word—more, the next line—more, the next scene. In many places people who had never seen the film before would have had no difficulty in keeping a word or two ahead of the dialogue. I'm bound to admit, though, that no other member of the large audience when I was at the Carlton seemed to be worried by these finicking considerations. See the film by all means, therefore, if you expect to be excited, moved and amused (ANDY DEVINE, of the train-whistle voice, is a mechanic as they were by its summary, in personal terms, of the history of aviation; but never say I guaranteed that you would be. It has a noble theme, much of it is fine to look at, the players are good—LOUISE CAMPBELL as *Falconer's* wife has one of those ungrateful parts calling for silent proud suffering and growing middle-aged beautifully, and does it as well probably as it could be done—and it recalls many tremendous events; but I think that as a story it misses fire.

Talking of clichés in dialogue, it is not difficult to find them in *The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse*; surprisingly enough, for I don't remember any in the play. However, this version does not stick closely to the play throughout: there are several notable differences, not the least of which is what seemed to me a totally unnecessary (and indeed wrongly managed) court scene at the end. The idea was presumably to make quite sure that everybody knew there was a sort of happy ending, that *Dr. Clitterhouse* (EDWARD G. ROBINSON)

had been acquitted on the grounds of insanity; but actually the result was merely to show the lawyer, *Grant* (THURSTON HALL), failing altogether to grasp the point he must have had in



MEN WITH MOUTHS—I.

Scott RAY MILLAND
Joe Gibbs ANDY DEVINE

mind when he made his earlier promise of an acquittal. If you do not know the story I can't make this clear to you without a lot of explanation, but I think someone should mention it.



MEN WITH MOUTHS—II.

Dr. Clitterhouse . . EDWARD G. ROBINSON
Okay ALLEN JENKINS

The part of the doctor who takes to crime for scientific reasons does not put a heavy strain on Mr. ROBINSON, and of course he does it well. "*Rocks*" *Valentine*, the vicious blackmailer, is

admirably done by HUMPHREY BOGART. The lady who falls for the *Doctor* is now *Jo Keller* the fence (CLAIRE TREVOR). One of the toughs is MAXIE ROSENBLUM (the "slugger from the circulation department" who had that beautiful telephone talk with his brother in *Nothing Sacred*) and another, the one who loses his voice, is ALLEN JENKINS. The subtleties lost are balanced, I suppose, by the action gained; anyway the film is worth a visit. See what *you* think about that ending.

Alerte en Méditerranée is a very commendable French essay on the *Kameradschaft* theme. The scene is Tangiers, where a French, a German and a British warship are anchored. Men from each ship go ashore, and in the middle of an international sing-song in a café a drunk from a tramp steamer is knifed. The police arrest members of each crew on suspicion; but as we know more or less who is guilty the emphasis is not on the mysterious aspect of the story but on the attitude towards each other of the three officers concerned. Neither the Frenchman (PIERRE FRESNAY), the German (ROLY WANKA), nor the Englishman (KIM PEACOCK) will believe that one of his own men did it, and though they began as friends a quarrel blows up. It is settled in rather melodramatic circumstances: all three are on board the French ship, racing a cloud of poison gas to a passenger steamer. The picture is exciting, amusing, moving and beautifully done with the usual French attention to detail. I hope it will penetrate, as *Kameradschaft* did, to parts of the country that hardly ever get a foreign-language film.

In the U.S., *Stranded in Paris* is called *Artists and Models Abroad*; which gives anyone who saw *Artists and Models* an idea of the sort of show it is. Here we have JACK BENNY again, and the YACHT CLUB BOYS again; but not very much music, an omission for which an elaborate fashion show in the *Arts Féminins* pavilion of the Paris Exposition does not, I think, exactly make up. (It seems, by the way, that one could climb into this pavilion over a few roofs from a cheap hotel, which will surprise several people.) There is one excellent number, though, with the inspiring refrain, "You're broke, you dope, you dope, you're broke," which almost reconciles me to the lamentable tradition that a quick-step will set its hearers jigging along in the wake of those who sing it. JOAN BENNETT is the girl; and there are several good wisecracks. R. M.

Lost

My friend Sympson is one of those sunlit souls who go through life with a smile, putting their troubles on other people.

"Henry," he said to me the other day, "if you are going to London there is a little thing you might do for me. I left my umbrella in the train on Tuesday evening, and it is probably at the Lost Property Office. A new umbrella with a brown handle."

"They will refuse to give it up," I protested feebly, "to anybody but the owner."

"Nonsense," said Sympson. "You will just have to pretend that you are me. I'll give you a letter addressed to myself if you think you are likely to be asked for proof of identity."

The Lost Property Office at the London terminus of our railway is a much bigger affair than I had expected.

"What can I do for you?" said the man behind the counter.

"My name," I said, "is Sympson. I left my umbrella in the 5.22 from London to Little Wobbley on Tuesday. I thought you might possibly have it. It was a newish umbrella with a brown handle."

He dashed away and returned a moment later with an umbrella—a good umbrella.

"Is this it?" he asked.

"It is," I said. "May I congratulate your department on its efficiency?"

"You may," he said grimly, "because this umbrella happens to be one that was left on the 12.34 from York to Newcastle in June 1937. We should have to be remarkably efficient to find an umbrella in June 1937 that was only lost last Tuesday evening."

I could not think of a really good answer.

"I hope," I said, "that you don't doubt my respectability. Perhaps I may prove my identity by showing you this letter?"

He took the envelope and took out the letter that was inside. Then he grinned and handed it back to me.

"DEAR MR. SYMPSON," it ran,—"Unless your account is settled definitely by the fourth prox. we shall put the matter in the hands of our solicitors."

It was awkward, but I rallied gamely.

"It shows I am respectable," I said, "or firms would not give me credit."

He disappeared round the back again and returned with another umbrella.

"Is this it?" he asked.



"OI—NOT SO MUCH OF IT, MAESTRO, PLEASE!"

"It is," I said boldly, taking a risk. "And if you tell me that it is one that King John lost in the Wash I can only reply that it is an exact twin of the one I lost on the 5.22."

I signed the book and paid the fine. Then somebody tapped me on the shoulder.

"Evening," said Colonel Hogg. "What are you doing here, Conkles-hill?"

I fled quickly. After all it probably, really was Sympson's umbrella—or so I thought until I returned home and discovered that Sympson had found the missing article at his club.

Five Dozen Impending Apologies

"Anxiety is felt here for the safety of Zoo foreigners, including sixty Britons, at Kuling."—*Straits Paper*.

LONDON JEWEL ROBBERY.

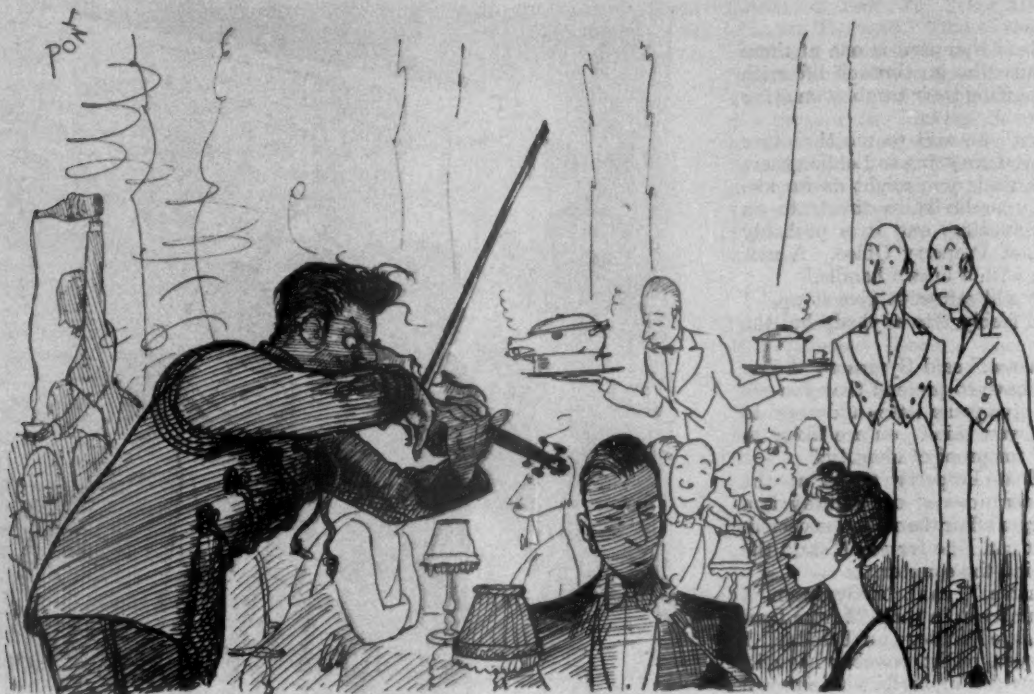
The premises of Andre Downes and Co., Ltd., manufacturing jewellers, in Marshall-street, W., were entered during the night. Jewellery was stolen."—*Evening Paper*.

Not rabbits, as you might suppose.

"General Maid Wanted, to sleep in; no washing; no beds."

Advt. in Kidderminster Paper.

Any food?



MAD GIPSY STUFF

Poetry on the Menu

STRANGE how poetry turns up in unexpected places. We were dining recently at a well-known restaurant, and on the bill of fare, where much was beautiful, this noble line caught the eye:—

Chump chop, tom and mush.

Not only as poetry does it run down the back. Any ass can see that much. It does more; it stirs the soul, it awakens the muse; one is driven to have a go and see what can be done with it.

Tenderness, for example. Here is a berceuse.

Espressivo. Now the day is over; now

Large and long the shadows creep;
Hare and hedgehog, stoat and sow,

Own alike the lure of sleep;
Little apple of my eye,
Hear my soothing lullaby;
Hush, my bratling, hush, hush;

pp. *Chump chop, tom and mush.*

And now Vigour. A Marching Song.

Marziale. Chump, chop, chump, chop,
Over the square we go;
Eyes right, your belt's too tight,
And a corn burns into your toe;

The awkward squad's all over the shop
And the sergeant makes you blush;
Chump, chop, ehump, chop,
ff. Tom, tom, mush.

Nor can we do better than end on a note of Happiness.
Our Nature Song.

Grazioso.

How delicious is the Spring
When the birds begin to sing
And their song is growing clearer every day,
Till the hen is on the nest
And the cock is at his best

In a rich though unpremeditated lay;

Not a note in all the woodland but is rounded like a
pearl

From the twittered "Tom and mush, tom and mush"
To the "Chump chop, chump chop" fatly from the
merle

And a blend of all the boiling from the thrush.

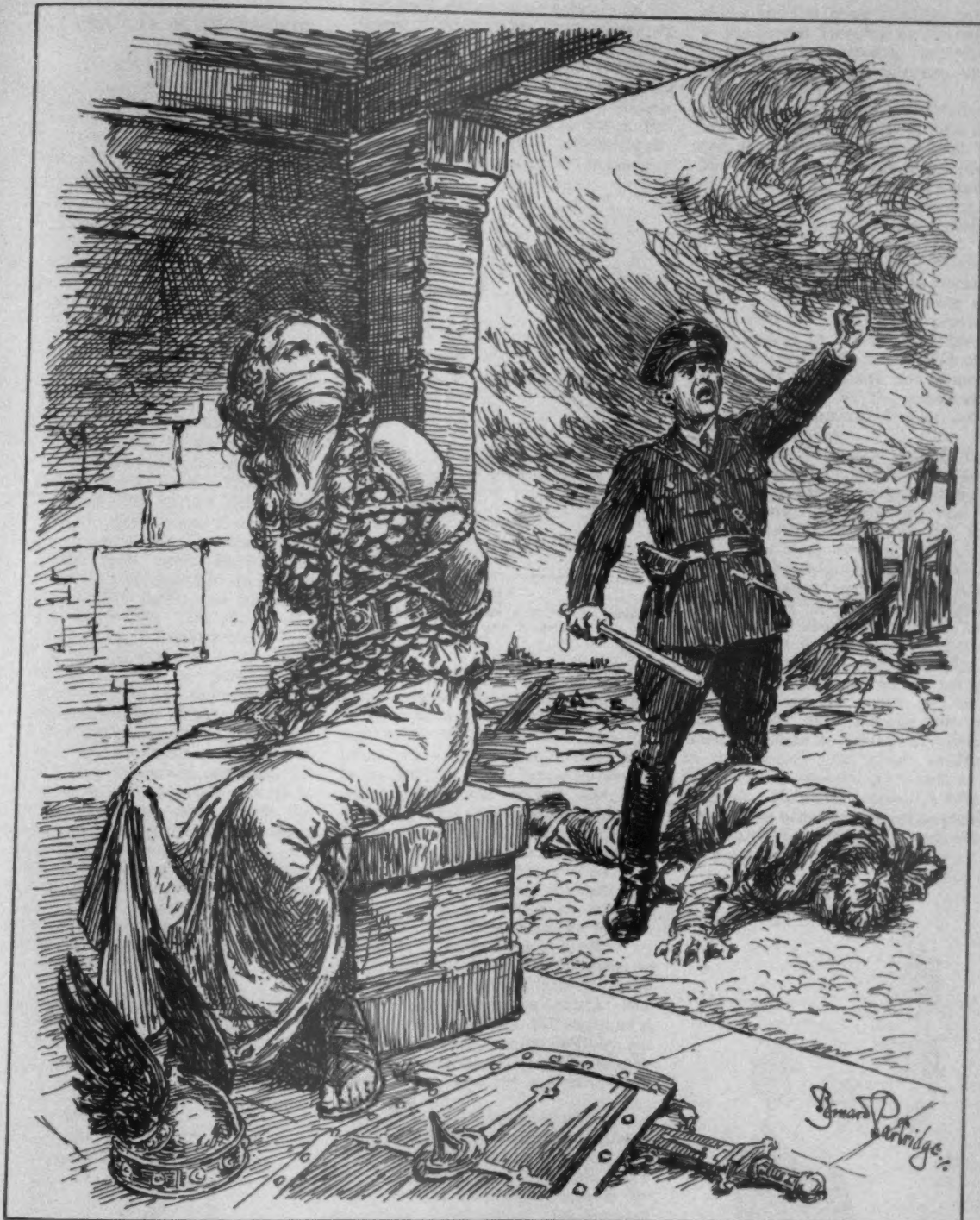
DUM-DUM.

"An official statement at Rome about the apparent cancellation of the world cruise, scheduled to start yesterday, by two Italian cruisers which were to call at Gibraltar, states that the trip was not postponed or cancelled, but that the date was given incorrectly in the Italian press.

The decree is intended to increase the birth rate."

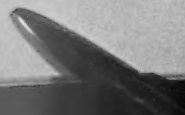
Palestine Paper.

Well, you know what sailors are.



OPPRESSION AND SUPPRESSION

Nazi Bully. "My will is the will of Germany!"



Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, November 21st.—Commons: Tributes to Queen of Norway. Share-pushing Bill given Second Reading. Debate on Jewish Emergency.

Tuesday, November 22nd.—Lords: Tributes to Queen of Norway. Limitation Bill given Second Reading.

Commons: Debates on Scottish Housing and Special Areas.

Wednesday, November 23rd.—Lords: Debate on Roads.

Commons: Debates on Pension Schemes and Special Areas.

Monday, November 21st.—At the end of Question-time (which fell far below its best level both in entertainment and instruction) the P.M. told the House of action which the Government have taken to facilitate the settlement of Jewish refugees. While the capacity of the United Kingdom in this respect was clearly limited, he said, the Governors of Tanganyika and British Guiana had been asked if their territories could help, and had replied favourably; the first, that about fifty thousand acres might be available in the Southern Highlands and a part of the Western Province, and the second that something like ten thousand square miles of sparsely-populated land could be used. The Government's intention was that the voluntary organisations concerned should despatch experts to carry out surveys, after which the Government would consider leasing suitable land on generous terms. Although he did not say so, there is nice poetic justice in the idea of a former German colony giving refuge to the victims of Nazi policy.

After the leaders of the three Parties



EARL HOWE. "HEIL, AUTODARREN!"

had paid sympathetic tributes to the Queen of Norway, Mr. OLIVER STANLEY had a pretty clear run with his Share-pushing Bill, which aims at short-circuiting the bucket-shop by enforcing the registration of dealers (certain classes, such as members of the Stock Exchange, being exempted), forbidding circularisation, and amending the Larceny



Mr. STANLEY. "THIS OUGHT TO BE GOOD. IT'S BEEN STEWING SINCE JULY."

Col. COLVILLE. "MINE'S NICE AND FRESH—ALL READY FOR ST. ANDREW'S NIGHT."

Act so that wilfully misleading statements about future prospects would count as false pretences. Lawyers will not relish the statement that experience has shown them to come third in the order of gullibility, unprotected ladies being their betters and only clergymen and doctors more easily imposed upon; but Mr. TOM JOHNSTON (who has long demanded a measure of this kind) declared this was so. He regretted that the Bill did not seek wider powers and made no attempt to reform the Bank Nominee system, which he described as a menace by which such vital national interests as newspapers and aircraft factories could be subject to anonymous control. But he was grateful for the Bill so far as it went. The City, represented by Sir GEORGE BROADBRIDGE and Mr. HELY-HUTCHINSON, thought it would work very well.

The House then passed to the Labour motion urging a concerted international effort to ease the lot of refugees, and this the Government accepted. Mr. NOEL BAKER opened his speech by describing incidents of the German pogrom which he guaranteed as true; these included the demolition of a boarding-school at two A.M., the sacking of a home for consumptive Jews, who were driven out in their

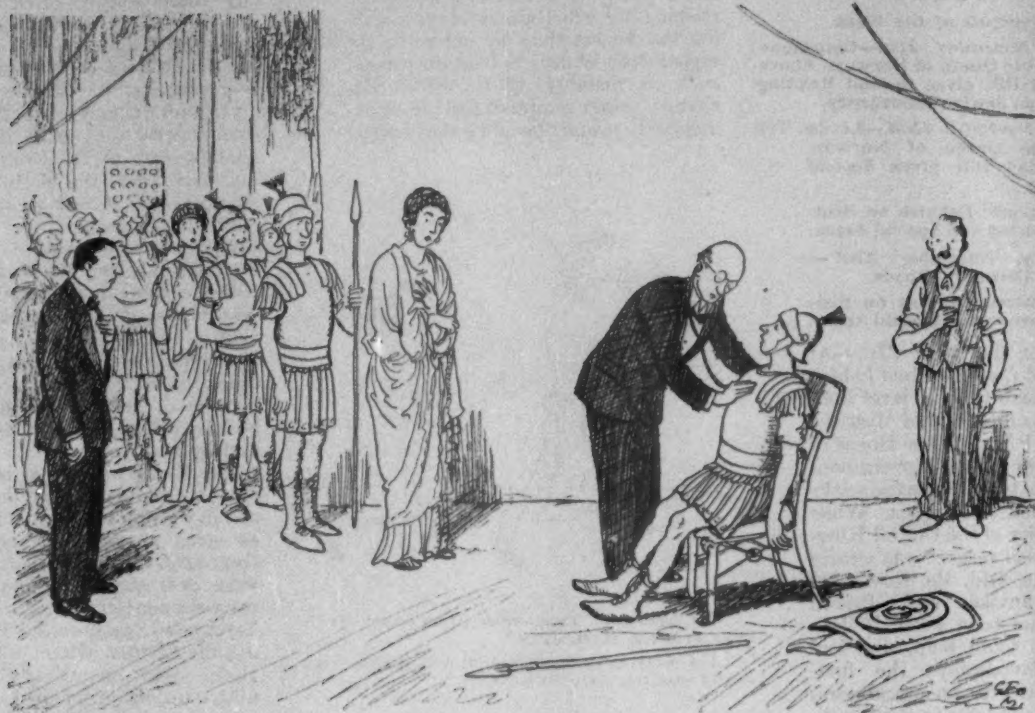
shirts, and the lining up of the patients at the Jewish Hospital at Nuremberg, including those freshly brought up from the operating theatre, one of whom dropped dead.

It might well have been an extract from a chronicle of the Middle Ages, and a particularly ugly one at that. Mr. NOEL BAKER went on to declare that in spite of Dr. GOEBBELS' statement that the rioting was spontaneous, it was significant that Berlin traffic had been diverted half-an-hour before the looting had begun. The world outside Germany must take common action, by stern protest in Berlin, by withholding friendliness while the martyrdom of the Jews, Christians and Socialists continued, by the expulsion of Dr. GOEBBELS' foreign agents, and by loan.

The House was agreed in condemning the latest Nazi outrage and in wishing to help its victims as much as possible, and Mr. GREENFELL suggested that there were over twenty million Germans outside Germany who could be returned as a reprisal. Replying, Sir SAMUEL HOARE told the House that the Evian Committee would meet in London in ten days' time and that he was letting in as many refugees as he reasonably could; to let in more would only inflame the anti-Semitic feeling which already existed in the country and which, as Home Secretary, he was doing his best to extinguish. He also described a scheme for looking after Jewish refugee children which Lord SAMUEL and others were preparing.



Mr. VERNON BARTLETT (new Independent Member for Bridgwater). "WHY BOTHER WITH A WHIFF?—I'VE GOT THE BRUSH."



" SAY 'NONAGINTA NOVEM.' "

Tuesday, November 22nd.—After Lord STANHOPE, Lord SNELL and Lord GAINFORD had paid tribute to the memory of QUEEN MAUD, their Lordships did their best for a short while to reassure each other that Royal Commissions were active, efficient and necessary bodies, and therefore not nearly so funny as the Man-in-the-Street finds them.

A thinly-attended Commons spent a sad day, momentarily brightened (for the Opposition) by the arrival of Mr. VERNON BARTLETT. Colonel COLVILLE sponsored a new Bill which he claimed would give a sharp stimulus to Scottish Housing. Judging from stories which came from both sides of the House, it would need to. Miss HORSBRUGH told how in her constituency of Dundee she knew of one room, ten feet by twelve, in which a father, mother and ten children were living. Mr. BUCHANAN, describing conditions in Glasgow which should shock the country far more than they do, spoke of five-roomed houses equipped with one lavatory and holding nearly fifty people.

In a brief debate on the Special Areas the MINISTER OF LABOUR quoted a

great many figures to show what a pile of money the Government had spent there. It sounded a great deal, unless one happened to put beside it the cost of one battleship.

Wednesday, November 23rd.—The Lords' debate showed much dissatisfaction with the state of the roads.



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO

Mr. SOMERVILLE, whom we draw this week, Whacked small back-benchers when an Eton beak.

Last year, Lord ELTISLEY pointed out, the Government spent on highway improvement no more than a quarter of the eighty-eight million pounds they took from road-users. Lord HOWE was particularly scathing. Action on the lines of the Bressey Report, he said, was still being held up while the Minister waited for proposals from local authorities, and in the meantime some of the new roads which the Committee had outlined were already being built over.

The Labour motion in the Commons calling for larger old age pensions met with sympathy but also with a complete answer, when Captain WALLACE reminded the House that even on the present scale the cost would rise in the next forty years, owing to variations in the birth- and death-rates, from ninety-five million pounds to nearly one hundred-and-fifty million; and that the Socialist plan would bring the figure up to nearly two hundred-and-sixty million.

To afford that figure a country must obviously be prosperously disarmed. Another brief debate on the Special Areas brought nothing new.

News by Telephone

"HELLO," I said into the receiver.
 "Hello," said a croaking voice. "May I speak to Mr. Oscar Goofington?"
 My brain reeled. My head swam. My temples began to throb. As I struggled to reply I held the receiver with both hands to stop it shaking. I had recognised that voice—it was the voice of Mr. Gugson.

There could only be one reason for Mr. Gugson ringing me up again—he had changed his mind and decided to produce my play after all. Fame, with all that it implied (*i.e.*, the admiration of beautiful women, one's picture in the illustrated papers, free samples of tooth-paste, etc.) was knocking at the door.

I don't know if you've written any plays, but if you have you'll probably know how difficult it is to persuade managers to change their minds and produce them after all. Before having mine turned down by Mr. Gugson I'd sent it to quite a number of people.

There was Mr. Spitzenstein, for example, who is well known as a sponsor of all that is best and highest in the theatre, the cinema and the all-in wrestling ring. I remember I rang him up before sending the play, so as to introduce myself.

"I have written rather a profound play about predestination," I said. "I have tried to express in dramatic form the conflict—"

"Send me the manuscript in the usual way," he replied, "and I'll read it. Any conversation about it now can only be entirely one-sided and a waste of time. There is no point whatever in discussing it till I know what it's about. Nothing is to be gained by our talking about something I've never seen." And he proceeded to develop this argument till my arm ached—by which time I understood why he didn't like one-sided telephone conversations.

I sent him the manuscript in what I assumed to be the usual way (*i.e.* in a stamped addressed envelope), and he sent it back in what he doubtless regarded as the usual way (*i.e.* with the pages arranged in another order and spread with generous helpings of butter and marmalade, bacon and eggs, and coffee). A letter accompanied it saying, "Mr. Spitzenstein has read your play about reincarnation and thanks you for submitting it. He is returning it simply because he has no suggestions to make for a production at the moment."

I of course wrote back to explain that my play was about predestination, not reincarnation, and I received a

charming letter from his secretary, expressing regret that the wrong manuscript had been returned to me, and promising, if I would send it back again, to have a search made for the right one.

After that I tried Mr. Ritzenkammer, that gifted judge of plays, chorus-girls and circus elephants.

"I have read your play," he said, in the letter which accompanied the manuscript, "but I am afraid the days of comedies about crazy families is over. And in any case it seems to me that the love-scenes between Nathaniel and Clarissa are altogether too childish."

I wrote back to explain that it wasn't a comedy about a crazy family but a serious play about predestination, the principal character being drawn from my own grandmother. And in any case Nathaniel and Clarissa were children.

But it was no good.

Then I tried Mr. Mellow. He is a man of exceptionally high intellectual attainments (it is even rumoured that he is a University Graduate), and I felt that he would be sure to understand and appreciate my play. He did.

"I have enjoyed reading *No Escape* tremendously," he wrote. "It is beauti-



"COME ON, YOU CHAPS. SETTLE IT FAIRLY, LIKE ENGLISHMEN."

fully written, very modern in texture and treatment, excellent theatre, and the kind of thing audiences love. I should like, if I may, to congratulate you on a brilliant piece of work. Unfortunately I have been forced out of management by heavy losses, so cannot be of any assistance to you in securing a production. I accordingly return the manuscript herewith." He added a postscript to the effect that he was starting a typewriting bureau and took the liberty of enclosing his rates.

At last I heard of Mr. Gugson. He comes in an entirely different category from these other managers. When one sends him a play one is not asking a favour of him—one is offering him employment. As you probably know, he runs the rather compact Garret Theatre and will put plays on for *anyone* in order to try them out, provided they will pay him two hundred pounds to cover the cost of production.

"I've read *No Escape*," he said the first time he rang up—about a week ago—"and I see you're prepared to pay for it being produced. But I'm afraid the play is altogether too weak. After the first ten minutes one knows exactly everything that is going to happen. Perhaps this is what you mean by pre-

destination? The only surprise is the ending, where the mad photographer tears the telephone bodily from the wall and hurls it out of the window—and that is quite implausible. Telephones do not come away from walls as easily as that, and in any case the gesture is not one which a photographer however mad would employ."

That was what Mr. Gugson said the first time he rang up. Now he was ringing up again. I had recognised his husky voice. So you see now why it was that the various reeling, swimming and throbbing symptoms which I have described came on. He had obviously changed his mind. My play was to be performed. My name would appear in print. I was going to be allowed to spend my money after all.

"This is Oscar Goofington speaking," I said as soon as I had recovered my powers of speech. "How are you, Mr. Gugson? I'm awfully glad to—"

"Gugson?" said the voice. "This is no Gugson. This is your old pal Charles, old boy. Suffering from rather a nasty cold in the voice, old boy. I say, old boy—got an idea—why don't you write a play? I'm sure it would—"

I tore the telephone bodily from the wall and hurled it out of the window.

Inexplicable Incident

"A VERY curious thing has happened to me. I may say a very distressing thing," said Mrs. Battlegate.

Laura's face assumed an expression of deep concern, and mine, I hope, did too.

Mrs. Battlegate's face looked just as usual.

"My memory for facts is, I think I may safely assert, a most reliable one."

Remembering Mrs. Battlegate on various committees, and particularly a rather long argument last Friday week concerning the price of doughnuts at the Institute Christmas Party, 1931—Miss Pin utterly defeated and Mrs. Battlegate's point proved up to the hilt by reference to the account-book—one conceded the point very readily.

"Where names are concerned I am not, I believe, wholly unreliable."

"No," said Laura.

"No," I said.

"No," said Mrs. Battlegate.

She sighed rather heavily and picked up a little china cat from the mantelpiece and put it down again—twice.



"AND DO I PUT IN ONE FOR THE URN?"

Then she said, "Faces, however, are quite another thing."

"Oh, quite!" cried Laura, and struck a false note altogether by adding in a very light-hearted way, "One face always looks to me so exactly like another face."

"Nonsense," said Mrs. Battlegate, coming temporarily out of her depression and providing in her own person quite a striking example of the inaccuracy of Laura's statement.

Laura at once declared she hadn't really meant what she said, and I added, with what at the moment seemed like ready tact, that a memory for faces was always said to be a royal attribute.

So Mrs. Battlegate explained that her father's family had been established in the Lincolnshire fens before William the Conqueror, and that in all probability royal blood *did* run in her veins.

The story, which was not new to Little-Fiddle-on-the-Green, took time, and there was nothing to do at the end of it but to suggest that *either* Mrs. Battlegate was a throwback to some pre-royal ancestor back in the Neolithic period, or else that the royal attribute had skipped a generation and by bad luck it happened to be hers.

"It may be so," said Mrs. Battlegate. She sighed in a defeatist way and picked up the china cat again, and this time she put it down in a slightly different place.

"I was in a teashop in Hop-St.-Hamilton no later than last Wednesday," she said—and one saw that the narrative had really begun. "It would be tedious to relate in detail the great difficulty that I had experienced in obtaining the General's favourite cheese. . . ."

It was.

" . . . So that I ordered a pot of strong Indian tea. The General prefers it to China. Suddenly I saw a familiar face. 'Mrs. Slapperton.' I said to myself, and at once went across and spoke to her."

Mrs. Battlegate paused for a long time and sighed again, and Laura murmured that Mrs. Slapperton had a lovely garden.

"Exactly," said Mrs. Battlegate rather sepulchraly. "Exactly. And I almost at once asked her: 'How,' I said, 'is the garden?' 'Full of weeds,' she answered, and at once began to talk about her dogs. As I listened the most extraordinary sensation came over me."

The pause was so much longer this time than any of the others that one ventured to suggest that perhaps Mrs. Battlegate had turned



" . . . AND THESE I WON AT AN AMUSEMENT ARCADE FOR ROLLING LITTLE BALLS THROUGH TINY LITTLE DOORWAYS MARKED WITH DIFFERENT NUMBERS."

faint and had had to return to the Indian tea.

"No. Nothing in the least like that. I suddenly realised that Mrs. Slapperton, to whom I was talking about her lovely garden, was *not* Mrs. Slapperton at all, but Mrs. Hudge, whom I know very slightly and do not at all care for, and who is utterly indifferent to the garden and thinks of nothing but her dogs."

"How had it happened?" said Laura—and perhaps the tone of awe in which she said it may have made up for anything that was lacking to the question in the way of common sense.

"I had—and this is what seems to

me so wholly inexplicable—mistaken one for the other."

"Are they alike?"

"Not in the very least," said Mrs. Battlegate.

* * * * *

"Honestly," Laura said to me long afterwards, "I didn't like to tell her that I've often done the same kind of thing myself."

"Oh, so have I," I said.

But we never told Mrs. Battlegate so. And it seems right to add that the moving of the china cat from one position to another also turned out to have no significance whatever.

E. M. D.

At the Play

"GENEVA" (SAVILLE)

EVERYONE who sees *Geneva* will feel that it is a truly astonishing performance for a dramatist whose first plays appeared in the 1890's, but Mr. SHAW must share with the world the credit for his continued dramatic vitality. For the world is still older than Mr. SHAW, and yet it is the world which, with unflagging variety and vitality, continues to offer him abundant and easy raw material. He has only to take the post-War movements—the League, Signor MUSSOLINI, Herr HITLER and the rest of them—and his play is ready to his hand, as he puts into vigorous and admirably terse and pointed sentences all the things they have to say for themselves in emphatic contradiction of each other.

Geneva has been written only just in time. A few years ago satire about the International Institute for Intellectual Co-operation in connection with the League of Nations would have had a good deal more point and less of the character of a parting kick at a diminishing back. But *Geneva* really consists of one great scene, in which Signor Bombardone and Herr Battler and General Flanco de Fortinbras, together with lesser figures, are summoned by the Hague Court to answer their accusers; and as there is no procedure because there are no precedents, the proceedings can become a most invigorating and entertaining conversazione. So high does the argument run, dominated all through by the forcefulness and colour with which Mr. SHAW, brilliantly partnered by Mr. CYRIL TROUNCER, invests the part of Bombardone. Bombardone lends vitality to his opponents and keeps the discussion at such a pitch of intensity that even the news that the world is about to end cannot greatly heighten the interest, although it provides variety in a very long Act and a new context for the display of different points of view.

Bombardone, who is the mouthpiece for the heroic and classical view of human nature and human life, has the best things to say as well as the best actor to say them. Battler (Mr. WALTER HUDD) has one wonderful moment—his entrance to Wagnerian music in shining silver mail. But he is patronised and eclipsed by Bombar-

done, and he continually strikes an emotional note, shuddering and weeping when it looks as though a highly dramatic widow (Miss PHILLIPPA GILL) is going to shoot herself, and again



BORROWING FROM UNCLE

Begonia Brown . . . MISS ALISON LEGGATT
Sir Orpheus
Midlander . . . MR. ERNEST THESIGER

when he realises that the forthcoming end of the world will mean the death

of his little dog. This emotional vein is not balanced by any adequate display of a part to tear a cat in, and we do not get any sense of latent force and capacity in Battler, which very much weakens the scene.

When I saw this play at Malvern it took about half-an-hour longer, and I then expected it would have been more severely pruned for London than has been the case. It drags at the beginning, although the American journalist, who is the boy-friend of *Begonia Brown* (Miss ALISON LEGGATT), the only beggetter of all the international troubles, is reduced to a shadowy figure. *Begonia* remains an echo of the pre-War Shaw, an embodiment of Camberwell patriotism, not seen, as G. K. CHESTERTON would have seen it, as all to the good, but as the root example of intolerance, Camberwell's hatred of Peckham explaining the hatreds of nations one for another. There is a rather crude scene between a Bishop and a Soviet Commissar, in which the Bishop dies of heart failure when the Commissar likens the Church of England to the Comintern—a sufficiently clumsy parallel between national and international organisations. Like *Begonia*, *Sir Orpheus Midlander* (Mr. ERNEST THESIGER), the British Foreign Secretary, also walks out of pre-War England, but he is intended as an anachronism. His extremely convention-ridden mind does not serve him ill, because his simplicities are thought British astuteness by the foreign politicians. Mr. THESIGER makes the most of *Sir Orpheus's* well-bred and casual language.

Like *Bombardone*, *General Flanco* (Mr. R. STUART LINDSELL) is treated well in the matter of argument, and indeed they share between them much of Mr. SHAW's best and most trenchant language. Much of it reads as though the characters had run away with the dramatist and had conquered more of his sympathies than he expected at the outset.

At Malvern Mr. DONALD WOLFIT acted the Judge. Here Mr. ALEXANDER KNOX plays the part with less emphasis. He is more of an intellectual and has less thrust, and at the conclusion, when he sums up the main moral of the play, that there is such a thing as world opinion and that the proudest heads are not indifferent to it, and says the curtain line, "But they came, they came," he should say it as Mr. WOLFIT did, in a way worthy of its place in the dramatist's scheme. D. W.



WHEN DICTATOR MEETS DICTATOR

Battler . . . MR. WALTER HUDD
The Judge . . . MR. ALEXANDER KNOX
Bombardone . . . MR. CECIL TROUNCER

"GENTLEMAN UNKNOWN"
(ST. JAMES'S)

Modern life must have a thousand-and-one terrors for Col. Blimp. To be stranded on the rocks of Nineteen Thirty-Eight with a conviction implanted by heredity and circumstance that the business of soldiering is a far far better thing than the business of buying and selling, must be infinitely sad. *General Forcursus*, Mr. Punch's old friend, no longer has any means of telling whether the young man waggling a baffie on the first tee is in the Royal Rutlands, or a star traveller in hair-slides; and if he undertakes to play with the stranger, what with a little slicing here and a little pulling there it may well not be until the fifth or sixth green that the method of insidious question and answer elicits his occupation. Too late, dammit Sir, for an orderly retreat; and the same must hold good in many other departments of shelved generalship besides golf.

That it holds good in the domestic sphere Mr. A. A. MILNE clearly demonstrates in this play, where a young man with an impeccable name and a confident manner breaks into the home of a retired warrior (whose career has been marked by sufficient ferocity to justify his appointment as the secretary of a golf club—golfers will know how much these few words say) and commits two out-and-out atrocities. One, he brings samples of socks and stockings out of a bag and strews them impudently about the sitting-room. Two, he throws such a spell over the *General's* daughter, admittedly having a thin time as her father's typist, that she runs away and marries him.

As you may imagine, the *General* goes so puce with rage at his daughter's double departure from type that five months later he is still looking the Northern Hemisphere sub-tropically in the eye. For my part I think he is quite right, and up to a point the story bears him out; but it leaves me quite unable to decide what Mr. MILNE really thinks about it. For his hero, though found worth while by some who should be able to tell, is undoubtedly a cad; yet, having treated his brand-new wife exceedingly casually, he works his way back by the end of the play to what one

gathers is supposed to be a permanent position on the fly-leaf of her good books. It seemed to me, I confess, that a nice, rather goofy-minded girl, she would have been well shot of him when

persuades himself that, having learned a painful lesson, the young couple will now forge peacefully ahead. I wish I could believe this, for not believing it spoils for me a little the charm which

lies in all his writing and lent an air of unreality to several of the scenes. In fact, although Mr. BARRY K. BARNES invests *Geoffrey Fontanelle* with a certain brazen fascination, it is an investment rather more speculative than satisfactory.

Geoffrey and *Janet* (Miss HILARY EAVES) begin by being very poor, their poverty made supportable by a family master which hangs on their wall in Notting Hill worth a possible ten thousand pounds. Then *Geoffrey*, in a fit of irresponsible insolence, calls on a Stocking King and sells him, against the evidence of his eyes, a pair of his own ghastly wares. This exploit has an unlikely but romantic consequence, for the Stocking King is impressed into giving away a job at a thousand a year. His niece, an unscrupulous girl, is also impressed, and wastes no time before seducing the new employee. Rumours of this getting round (for she is the kind of girl who is weekly portrayed sitting North, West, South and East on the same shooting-stick) eventually reach *Janet's* ears and result in the longish showdown from which, as I said, the *Fontanelles* emerge united.

The play is light and some of its scenes are contrived with all its author's ready sense of comic situation; but I do not think it is one of his best, for too much of it is blurred either by the over-emphasis of *Fontanelle's* hard-boiledness or the under-emphasis of a sentimental reaction to it.

In view of that, I think Mr. BARNES does well. So does Miss EAVES, who has a naturalness of manner which is very attractive. But, all things considered, the most finished performance is that of Mr. JOHN TURNBULL as a textile peer who has retained modesty and a sense of humour. It is a delightful part, and Mr. TURNBULL loses nothing of it. As the peer's wayward niece Miss RUTH DUNNING ably suggests the trick of turning homes upside-down, and as the retired *General* Mr. MARCUS BARON makes us all realise at least one of the possible horrors of war.

ERIC.



BRINGING COALS TO NEWCASTLE

Geoffrey Fontanelle . . . Mr. BARRY K. BARNES
Sir Howard Saxby . . . Mr. JOHN TURNBULL

she had the chance, but in the course of a long scene of recrimination and reconciliation Mr. MILNE evidently



VERY-GREAT-GRANDFATHER APPROVES

Geoffrey Fontanelle . . . Mr. BARRY K. BARNES
Janet Andrew . . . Miss HILARY EAVES

A Racket Exposed

It is a startling announcement which I have to make. I have to expose a scandal and explode a myth. I have reason to believe that some unscrupulous international syndicate is at the back of it, one that will stop at nothing in order to delude the public; and but for a lucky chance that led me last week to stumble on their secret, the public might have continued for a long time to be taken in by this daring scheme, so staggering in its simplicity. The exposure is bound to be a shock to all right-thinking citizens; hence this preamble, this softening of the blow. Yet I cannot shrink from my statement, which I have personally proved up to the hilt:

There is no such thing as the Isle of Man.

I admit the faint possibility that it has disappeared, that it has been en-

gulfed in some momentous submarine upheaval. I am strongly inclined, however, to the belief that it has never been. At all events it is not there at present. Or, to be completely accurate, I am prepared to swear that it was not there last week. Here is my story.

Last week I was sailing my yacht north from Holyhead to the Clyde. It came on to blow hard from the S.W., so I altered course with a view to sheltering in Douglas. *It was not there.* In due course I found the Mull of Galloway; but, feeling it my duty to investigate still further, I turned south again to seek the missing island. Nobody could find fault with my course, which I laid with the utmost care—S½E, from the Mull to Peel. But my worst forebodings were justified when once again, without having sighted land, I found myself at Holyhead.

Knowing how unlikely it was that my astonishing news would find immediate credence, I have spent the last few days checking every detail and

trying to find some evidence that the island really existed. I bought what purported to be a map of the place and find that, so far as I can judge, I sailed up the main street of Douglas and slap through the House of Keys. I am convinced (and the many distinguished people whom I am proud to number among my friends will bear witness as to my powers of observation) that I should have noticed them had they been there.

What other evidence can one seek? You may say—I have no objection—that the easiest thing would be to find someone who had been there. I have sought high and low and can find no one. I have found people in plenty who say they know people who have been there, just as one can find plenty of people who know people who have seen a ghost; but you never meet anyone who *has* seen a ghost, and I can find nobody who has himself been to the Isle of Man. I am driven to the conclusion that no one ever has.



"DO YOU SELL SURET?"

"WHAT D'YOU TAKE ME FOR—AN IRONMONGER?"



"MUMMY, DOES UNCLE HATE TO CHAIN HIS WAISTCOAT UP?"

The Isle of Man does not exist. From this fact arises a host of questions which it is the duty of the responsible authorities to investigate. What happens to the money voted annually to be spent on the island? Where do the steamers full of holiday-makers purporting to be bound for the Isle of Man actually go? What hideous form of illegal holiday do the holiday-makers actually make? Where is the Tourist Trophy Race actually run? What is the Bishop of Sodor and Man actually bishop of? (For nobody has heard of Sodor, and now there isn't any Man.) And, most sinister question

of all, those Territorial Brigades who disappear for a fortnight in the summer and say they have been training in the Isle of Man—where do they disappear to? All these questions must be investigated without delay. No stone must be left unturned, no avenue unexplored. There is no doubt that people in high places are involved; how else could the hoax be substantiated by recognition and mention in official publications and in Parliament? The high places must not, shall not save them.

The Isle of Man, I repeat, has no more existence than the tails of the cats

which are supposed to hail from it. There could be no better illustration of the lengths to which these people are prepared to go than the fact that they do not scruple even to chop the tails from unfortunate dumb creatures in order to perpetuate this monstrous myth.

"Question: Which of these five things does not belong to the same group as the others: oyster, mussel, whelk, scallop, clam?"

Answer: Cockle."

From an Evening Paper Intelligence Test.

Had you that time, eh?



"... WITH APOLOGIES FOR THE ABOMINABLE SPELLING, YOURS, ETC., ETC."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Decanal Sermonettes

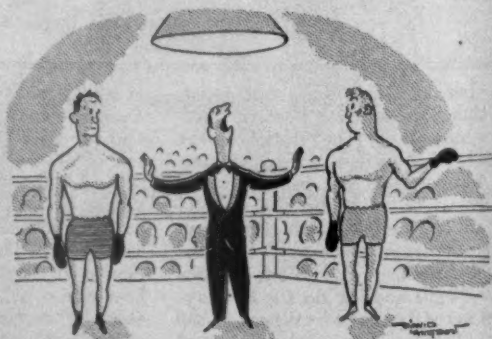
SERMONETTES is the word our former Dean of St. Paul's has chosen to give to his latest book of essays—*Our Present Discontents* (PUTNAM, 7/6), and it is as good a description as any. We know pretty well what to expect from Dean INGE, who in this volume is downright and plainspoken as ever. We are left in no doubt as to his opinions on the present international situation, or indeed on any other topic he chooses to handle. He strikes out boldly in his Introduction, belabouring dictators and the Spanish Government: about the Czecho-Slovakian affair he is suavely sensible: he has his say about the difficulties of prayer and about Starving the Clergy: he is eminently sound on Intolerance. Indeed he is sound in his Victorian way on most subjects, and he treats an immense variety. For these, it must be remembered, are journalistic essays, and the space allotted to each dissertation is necessarily limited. In three-hundred-and-fifty pages are forty-nine essays and an Introduction, which is six times as long as any of them. But brief as they are, there is always something in each of them that was worth saying. In "A Model for Dictators" he discourses on the great AUGUSTUS; in an article on the Emperor JULIAN he takes occasion to wonder how he would have behaved if it had been his lot to live as an educated Roman in the days of the early Christians. Probably he would still have been a Platonist—but he hopes he would not have been deterred from the new religion by any Numidian lion. And he concludes with the cheering confession that the years he has spent since his retirement have been on the whole the happiest of a long life. *Prosint ceteri!*

Sussex Matriarch

If anyone still doubts the kick to be got out of being domesticated, *The Mistress of Stanton's Farm* (HEATH CRANTON), 7/6 is the book to reassert the true position (given that we can well afford to dispense with the social despotism that rendered SUSANNAH STACEY, of Regency fame, at once the terror and saviour of East Chilmington). A squire's daughter who unaccountably married a Sussex farmer who called her "Ma'am" to the end of her days, this benevolent termagant assumed the care of five step-children, kept her county acquaintance by her notable cooking, and endeared herself to her retainers by doctoring all their ills with herbs and remarkable efficacy. Her feats of housekeeping are delightfully chronicled by her "Squire's" great-nephew, Mr. MARCUS WOODWARD, who tacks two pages of "Grandma's" recipes to the tail of every entertaining chapter. If you want to keep pears you have only to hang them up by the stalk, but if you want to brew orange wine you need the brandy at five shillings a quart that was available for even less in that contraband-loving county and age. "Grandma" was certainly a notable housewife. No wonder her "STACEY" lived to ninety-one!

Stethoscopes to the Drama

Footnotes to the Theatre (PETER DAVIES, 18/-) is a contemporary survey of the different aspects of the subject conducted by a number of experts and edited by Mr. R. D. CHAQUES. In the main its contributors are agreed that the English theatre is in a bad way, and that in the health and variety of her stage New York leads the world. Over here, says Mr. ALISTAIR COOKE, the theatre is a sedative; in America it is a stimulant. Mr. ST. JOHN ERVINE is pessimistic about the taste of a mass-amused public, but Mr. REGINALD DENHAM defends the film as more complementary than rival. The arguments in favour of the National Theatre are set out by Mr. GEOFFREY WHITWORTH. Most of the contributors find that the technical resources of the stage have developed far beyond the capacity of the playwright of to-day to use them; in this respect Professor ALLARDYCE NICOLL is hopeful that poetic drama may show the way out of the cul-de-sac into which the naturalistic play of mumbling manners has led. One of the most interesting chapters, by Miss SYLVIA SAUNDERS, reviews the theatre under the dictatorships. She thinks that of Italy leads, with its spate of plays, good criticism and comparative



"IN ORDER TO AVOID ANY UNPLEASANTNESS, WILL ALL THOSE WHO CONSIDER BLODGER TO BE THE WINNER PLEASE RAISE THEIR RIGHT HANDS."



IMPRACTICABLE

Judge (to Witness). "REPEAT THE PRISONER'S STATEMENT TO YOU, EXACTLY IN HIS OWN WORDS. NOW, WHAT DID HE SAY?"

Witness. "MY LORD, HE SAID HE STOLE THE PIG——"

Judge. "IMPOSSIBLE! HE COULDN'T HAVE USED THE THIRD PERSON."

Witness. "MY LORD, THERE WAS NO THIRD PERSON!"

Judge. "NONSENSE! I SUPPOSE YOU MEAN THAT HE SAID, 'I STOLE THE PIG'!"

Witness (shocked). "OH, MY LORD! HE NEVER MENTIONED YOUR LORDSHIP'S NAME!" [Dismissed ignominiously!]

Charles Keene, December 6th, 1884.

freedom; that of Russia, once so promising, is suffering sadly from liquidation and "Socialist Realism"; and for the time being the German theatre is anaesthetised by the Minister for Popular Delusion (such a Goebbels version of *Victoria Regina* was presented in Berlin that DISRAELI was removed completely!). The book cannot be more than an expression of personal opinions, but these are sufficiently representative to carry weight. It is generously illustrated.

Set to Partners

One doubts if her publishers were well advised to revive the first, and hitherto unpublished, novel of the authoress of *Strange Houses*—even with the assurance that this long and rather spineless story has been worked over with all

Miss CORA JARRETT's present competence. American women who employ themselves conjugating the verb "to divorce" in all its tenses are not attractive; and the heroine of *The Silver String* (HEINEMANN, 8/6), who contemplates a severance in the first chapter and makes up her precarious mind about it in the last, is by no means the only woman in her set to indulge in matrimonial readjustments. Undoubtedly there are potential comedy and potential tragedy in the theme: the tact with which *Ann* and *Corey* seek to avoid the political repercussions of their intended disruption has hints of the first; and the sadistic tendencies of *Ann's* first husband—if one could really credit them—of the second. There is also a pathetically serio-comic scene in which the youthful *Ann* defends her adored stepmother's MS. poetry-book from the ribald possession

of her cousin. For a novel of over four hundred pages, however, these oases are inadequate.

Why Books Die Young

One critic has advised readers of Mr. CYRIL CONNOLLY'S *Enemies of Promise* (ROUTLEDGE, 10/6) to begin with the third section, which is autobiography, an account of the author's life until he left Eton. Certainly this is brilliant and highly entertaining, but for that very reason it seems just to assume that the author knew what he was doing when he put it third. He describes it as his "credentials": a description of the influences that formed the judgment of the critic who, in the first two sections of the book, examines the current state of literature and the reasons governing the "high rate of mortality" among literary works. These two sections are no less brilliant and entertaining in their own way. The first is an analysis of prose style, through which Mr. CONNOLLY tries to discover what is the language that causes a book to last; and in the second he takes in order the distractions that prevent a young writer from producing one—the enemies of promise. The whole book, with its incidental criticism of many celebrated writers, is intensely interesting, and no one concerned with writing or reading should miss it.

More Glimpses of "The Jungle"

The earlier chapters of *Little Steel* (WERNER LAURIE, 7/6) are filled with heavy industry and heavier sociology, with the iniquities of professional psychologists working super-confidence tricks and professional politicians running plain grab-rackets. The selflessness of Labour leaders is feelingly contrasted with the organised brutality of the forces of law and order on the American pattern, and the effect of a perusal is to make one more than usually content with British institutions. For all this feast of exposure Mr. UPTON SINCLAIR'S latest novel will of course be banned in Fascist countries and circulated by millions elsewhere. Rather fortunately however, when the author has done his duty by his principles in his own inimitable manner, he decides to have a spell off. He allows his central figure, a millionaire by misfortune, to change from cardboard to flesh and blood, giving him as companion a fascinating itinerant inventor who forcibly and excitingly rescues him from his financial advisers, and disappears with him into the peace and quiet of a holiday with a lunatic, and a

sojourn in a country gaol. The story just comes to a stop at an appointed page, with nothing settled, nothing finished and the fate of fifteen million dollars' worth of securities—most unsafely lodged—fidgeting the reader far more than the destination of the other characters.

Jaunt to Africa

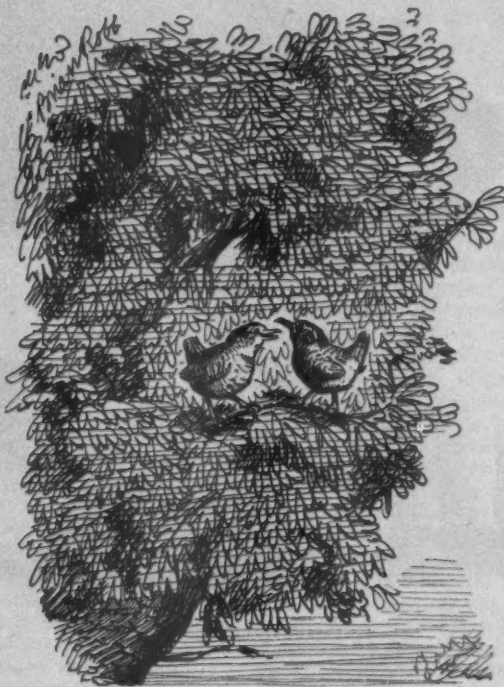
Miss C. FOX SMITH, better known to readers of *Punch* as "C. F. S.," has written an attractive book of travel in *All the Way Round* (MICHAEL JOSEPH, 15/-), with the secondary title, "Sea Roads to Africa." Really it is two books—one made up of that sea-history, of those adventures and vicissitudes of the

Mariners of England which, whether in prose or verse, "C. F. S." tells so well; the other of her personal reactions to sights and sounds met with on an African journey. Of the former one would not lose a word, of the latter one would like a great many more words. Whether she is telling of her own dangerous curiosity as to a spitting cobra or describing how in the Matopos dozens of lizards stood round her as she picnicked, "gazing with their jewelled eyes," or recalling with sincere and infectious hero-worship the great story of "Dr. JIM," to whose grave she made pilgrimage, she is as good as one could wish, informative and interesting. She knows so much that it is quite pleasant to find her making the mistake, just now when they are fashion's favourites, of commiserating with the ostrich because his feathers are not worn save by himself.

Death at the Seaside

Although there are indications in *How Did Elmer Die?* (LONGMANS, 7/6) that Mr. GEOFFREY PHILIP WEST'S experience as a sensational novelist is limited,

his story contains a pleasant amount of originality. He has, for example, staged his murder in a most exclusive seaside hotel, where the proprietor was a fully-equipped anob. Accordingly an unusual assortment of people were connected with the crime, and a pertinacious young woman called *Lady Angela Arnud* was by no means a negligible factor in solving it. As a rule the youthful sleuth of detective fiction is irritating enough, but Mr. WEST is admirably economical in the use of his *Angela*. It is, however, not quite clear why the murderer killed his man when a sound kicking would seem to have been a less drastic and more satisfactory way of treating him. But it is certain that the merits of this story very much outweigh any faults that may be found in it.



"AH HA—A LITTLE BIRD TOLD ME."

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Charivaria

"To be a good racing motor-cyclist one must have a steady nerve and a sure eye," states a manufacturer. And of course a motor-cycle.

★ ★ ★

"The boat shuddered suddenly; the shark had scraped its bottom deliberately. The sensation was horrible."

Pearson's Magazine.

That's for the shark to say.

★ ★ ★

We are unable to agree with the suggestion that as a first step towards appeasement the new buildings on the famous Embankment site should be rechristened "The Adolphi."

★ ★ ★

"It is as difficult to pay income-tax twice as it is to avoid paying at all," says an income-tax inspector. This is of course pure conjecture.



★ ★ ★

The recently-published memoirs of an ice-hockey star are said to be entirely true to life in every detail. The publishers have even left in the padding.

★ ★ ★

Vegetables inhale and exhale very much as human beings do, says a scientist.

Efforts are being made to train the onion to hold its breath.

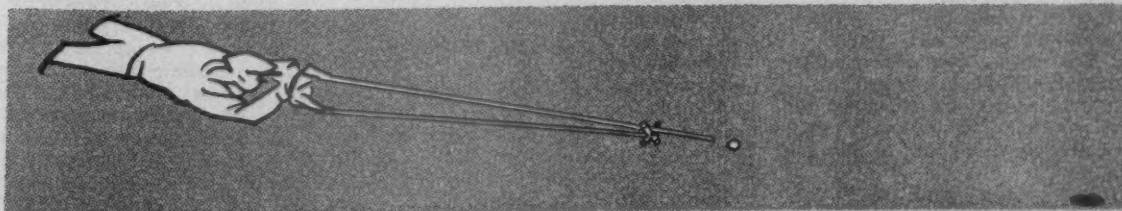
★ ★ ★

"Give me the mashie-niblick," he would say to his caddie, and with feet fairly close together and knees slightly bent the ball would drop like a poached-egg close to the pin."—*Observer.*

Whence, with fists clenched and eyes tightly shut, it would leap like a rasher of bacon into the hole.

★ ★ ★

"The people of to-day," complains a small tradesman, "no longer pay as they go." Presumably they don't go if they can pay.



A Manx cat recently exhibited was as long as a fully-grown dachshund. There seemed to be no end to it.

★ ★ ★

Divide et Impera

"The Duke recalled how many people were shocked by the first train journey made by Queen Victoria. That was in 1842, made from Slough to Paddington and when the Queen travelled in large sections the public was profoundly shocked by the risk to her person."—*Singapore Paper.*

★ ★ ★

A huge granite disc was recently brought to the surface of the sea by a trawler. We doubt, however, if this is a record.

★ ★ ★

Studio audiences at B.B.C. variety programmes are admitted free. The general opinion is that it's worth it.

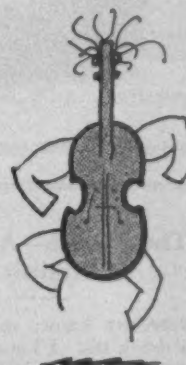
★ ★ ★

A famous violinist admits that he trains like an athlete just before an important recital. Naturally he likes to be as fit as his fiddle.

★ ★ ★

"Blonde dolls are the most popular," says a toy manufacturer. This is also the opinion of Mr. DAMON RUNYON.

★ ★ ★



A Society woman says she always reads a modern novel when having a mud bath. We understand she simply wallows in both of them.

★ ★ ★

"A number of Ukrainians from Ruthenia have been kidnapped, taken into Poland and called upon to sign a document stating their desire to be annexed to Hungary."—*Daily Telegraph.*

Who kidnapped them? Bulgarians?

★ ★ ★

A Surrey golfer is said to be doing well on the billiard-table. In fact he's already done a hole in one.



"WE MUST DECIDE WHERE WE'RE GOING FOR CHRISTMAS."

The French—Are They English?

EVERYONE knows that the French don't drink tea. I know. At Dover I shake the tea-leaves of England off my feet and I don't expect to mention the word again until I have breakfast on the boat-train coming back.

This year I went to the French Alps, to climb. At seven o'clock on a July morning I was telling my guide what I had in my rucksack to last the two of us in food for two days—sardines, dried fruit, bread, cold meat, tomatoes, pears, and wine.

"Tea?" asked Adolphe. Adolphe found life too short for all that had to be done in it. Shaving was one thing he cut out, unnecessary words another.

"Tea?" I repeated.

"Tea," said Adolphe.

I went and bought some tea.

At five o'clock that afternoon we reached the Refuge, perched on a tongue of glacier eleven thousand feet above sea-level. The Refuge was not elaborately furnished, but it had five spirit stoves.

"I will make some tea," said

Adolphe. He got out three of the spirit stoves.

I am no good with spirit stoves and I am intelligent enough to know it. Adolphe was no good either, but he didn't know it. I studied the notices on the wall which told me what to do in a case of delirium tremens, unexpected confinement and insects in the ear. Then, still speculating on the usefulness of these, I went out to look at the scenery. White Mont Blanc was suspended above the clouds in the far distance. Nearer, the Ailefroide range was a heavy blue. Perfect skiing slopes stretched down from my feet. It was a view even hardened Alpinists are lyrical about. I didn't wonder. At intervals I went into the hut and watched Adolphe sympathetically. He was sitting on the floor now and all five stoves were scattered round him. By this time even he didn't want that tea more than I did.

At 6.30 four young Frenchmen came into the Refuge carrying rucksacks half as big as themselves. They too looked at Adolphe sympathetically.

"You can use our stove when we've finished cooking," said one, "then we can all have some tea."

Being English and therefore, I be-

lieved, reserved, and my French not being adequate for expressing strong emotion, I am afraid I only conveyed half my gratitude. Adolphe didn't convey any.

Adolphe and I took fifteen minutes to eat our bread, sardines, etc. Then we waited for our tea. And waited.

First they made soup with soup-cubes and spaghetti (three-quarters of an hour). Then they boiled some rice. They salted it. It was so salty that they had to begin all over again and add the original amount of rice and water (no salt—one hour). Adolphe sat at the table with his eyes fixed on the packet of tea. He infected me. There was an alpenglow outside which was (no doubt) irradiating the snowfields and flushing the peak of Mont Blanc. But I dared not leave the hut. Someone might put the stove out by mistake.

By this time the rice was merely uneatable and the cook had lost interest in the meal and was playing his mouth-organ. Someone else emptied a packet of drinking chocolate into it (the rice, I mean) and let it all cook (fifteen minutes). What they meant to cook next I shall never know. As soon as they took the pan off Adolphe planted firmly on the stove a pan containing roughly two gallons of water. I gave a

great sigh of relief. While it boiled (one hour) I went out to look at a somewhat frost-bitten alpenglow.

When I came in one of the French boys was fishing in the pan with an enormous soup-ladle.

"What *are* you doing?" I asked.

"Just taking out some dirt," he said, showing me a microscopic piece of carbon nestling on the ladle. I wouldn't have gone to that trouble myself, but I could easily have arranged an *entente cordiale* between him and a very English aunt of mine who lives in Kensington.

"Do you take your tea strong or weak, Messieurs?" I asked formally.

"Oh, you make it as you think. You have the habit," they said.

I refrained from pointing out that I hadn't the habit of making two gallons of (almost) boiling water into tea without a teapot. I emptied half a packet of tea into the pan and hoped for the best.

"Marvellous," said the ex-cook.

"Marvellous," I said myself.

While we drank our tea the most talkative of the French boys (the one who never stopped talking at all, that is) got out the Visitors' Book. In the column headed "Remarks," where people put "Good weather," "Bad weather," "Middling weather" or "Marvellous view" he wrote carefully, "A tea strong and abundant."

It was nearly ten. We went to bed.

At five next morning we staggered out of bed to start our climb to the summit.

"That tea," said the talkative one—"I couldn't get to sleep."

"Same here."

"And me," said the others.

"We must make some more. It will keep you awake till you get to the top," said Adolphe.

After all, he was the guide; he knew.

We made some more.

At four o'clock that afternoon I got down to La Grave. It has a large hotel, A.A. and all that, and English families stay there. There were several of them on the terraces having tea and toast.

"Bah! Insular!" I said to myself contemptuously, and ordered one of those thoroughly continental Pernods.

The Resourceful Merchant and the Persistent Insurance Agent

A RESOURCEFUL Merchant had suffered endless torture at the hands of a Persistent Insurance Agent who with inextinguishable fervour had striven unsuccessfully for many years to persuade him to increase his fire cover. The Resourceful Merchant had adopted every

conceivable method (weed-killer excepted) to rid himself of this unspeakable nuisance, and when the latter eventually called upon him, together with the Fire Manager of the Spontaneous Insurance Company Limited, on a crusade of special intensity, he had a happy thought. He whispered a few hurried instructions to his clerk, and then joined his visitors in the office. He shook hands heartily with the surprised agent and expressed particular delight at seeing the Fire Manager, to whose blandishments he responded with unexpected interest. All was merry as a marriage bell and the form of application for increased cover was set discreetly before the Resourceful Merchant when a sudden wisp of acrid smoke crept under the door and quickly filled the office. The effect on the visitors was instantaneous. To the accompaniment of much choking and spluttering they hastily snatched away the application form and retreated in complete confusion. The Resourceful Merchant, who had remained a model of calmness during this emergency, popped outside, helped his clerk to stamp out the conflagration and sent him to purchase a fresh supply of blotting-paper.

Moral: THE END JUSTIFIES THE MEANS.



"YOU SHALL HAVE IT, DARLING—IF I HAVE TO PAY CASH FOR IT!"

Crime and Punishment

Of all the men I know who ever went to prison George Baker has always seemed to me to be the luckiest.

Endowed with a fine imagination and a remarkable prose style, he found himself unable to write books during the early part of his life owing to the insistent claims of art, drink and love. So (in a fit of ennui) he burned his house down.

This gave him precisely the opportunity that his intrinsically noble nature required; loneliness in a prison cell after the tedium of dissipation and riotous companionship seemed delightful to him, and in prison he composed (and subsequently wrote) perhaps the greatest romance in the language on the iniquity of solitary confinement and the beastliness of potato-stew. At large again he enjoyed the luxury that came to him from riches (for his book, I need hardly say, was a best-seller), until with a shock of sorrow he received his first demand for income-tax.

It was a very stiff demand, and there was nothing that George hated so much as what he termed extortion and blackmail.

So he burned his house down again.

Many valuable pictures and much fine furniture would have perished in the flames, but George Baker had been sensible enough to sell them beforehand. ("You can do no good," he said to me once, "with insurance companies nowadays.")

Immured a second time, he wrote his standard work on political economy, proving, as I think very conclusively, that indirect taxation is the only stable system of internal

finance, and also a rather lurid novel (based on personal interviews) about the criminal underworld of Soho.

His bank balance by this time was enormous, and not long after he had emerged from the prison gates the Commissioners of Inland Revenue began to write to him urgently again, pointing out in their well-known and courteous manner how much the State was in need of his financial help.

For some time George Baker travelled about England in a very expensive motor-car considering what was best to do, but in no case leaving an address behind him nor writing down his correct name in hotel registers.

But he was feverish and ill at ease, and after a while he wrote a letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer pointing out the nostalgia for the simple life of Dartmoor had come upon him again, enclosing a postal order for seven-and-sixpence and stating that unless he was promised protection from the irksomeness of further income-tax demands he would feel compelled to throw an incendiary bomb into the Treasury or the Bank of England.

The Government of the day recognised the strength of his arguments and undertook to release him from persecution; and he now lives, respected and beloved, in a large castle (restored after the pseudo-Gothic manner) in one of the wilder parts of Wales.

What pleases George Baker most (as he never tires of telling me) is the fact that during all the money-earning and not the least enjoyable portion of his career he has been housed and clothed and fed and even entertained at his fellow-citizens' expense. . . .

I only mention the case of George Baker in order to prove (if proof were needed) that punishment can seldom be really fair.

A man of meditative and introspective mind (and such in his better moments George Baker undoubtedly was) can never suffer so much through incarceration as an Alpine climber, a totalitarian statesman or a thug.

Your head-gardener, if he happens to commit robbery with violence, will in all probability be told to take charge of the Governor's garden at the penal institution to which he is sent for reform; and when he has pulled up all the flowers and vegetables and told the Governor what ought to have been put in, he will probably be very happy indeed. A deep-sea diver or an elephant hunter, whatever he is given to do, will mope and pine away. Humane treatment equally fair to the rich and to the poor means champagne with one lot of dinners and beer with the other. The real lover of nature and her wild ways is much more delighted by his tame prison rat than the chartered accountant who only collects postage-stamps.

On the other hand it seems to me that prison life and prison life only provides the perfect calm that is necessary for filling in football-coupons with accuracy and skill.

Quite evidently Sir Samuel Hoare is at the beginning of a very difficult and complicated piece of work, and I wish him the best of luck. But if he does get George Baker again I think he ought to keep him away from the library. Especially because George Baker is determined to go to prison again as soon as we have a war. EVOE.



"AND THE WONDERFUL THING ABOUT NIGHT-LIGHTS, EMILY, IS THAT THE LIGHT FROM THAT TINY FLAME TRAVELS AT EIGHTEEN MILLION MILES A SECOND."

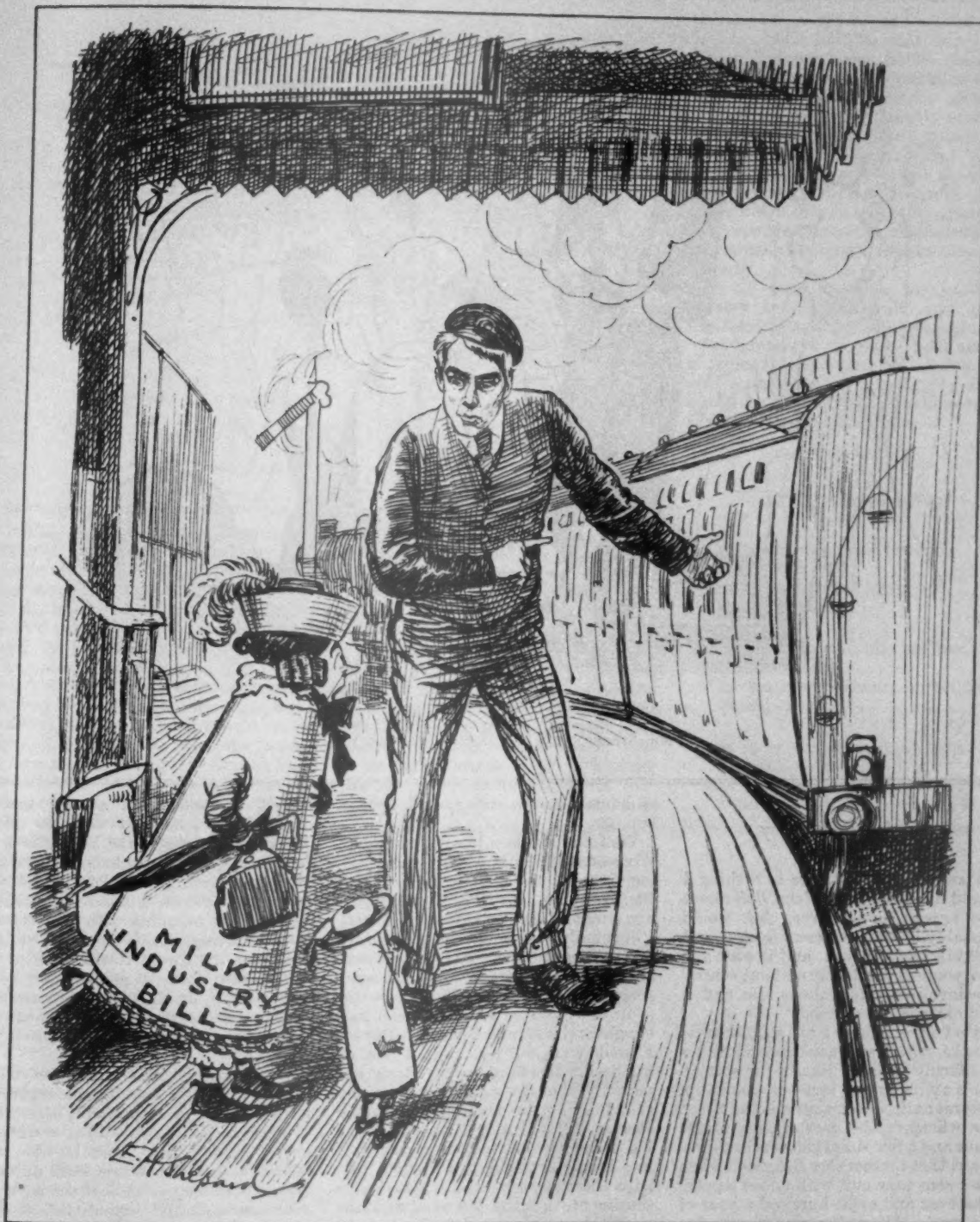
"A.R.P.'S SOCIAL SIDE.

WOMEN VOLUNTEERS NEEDED.

TRY-OUT OF SIRENS."

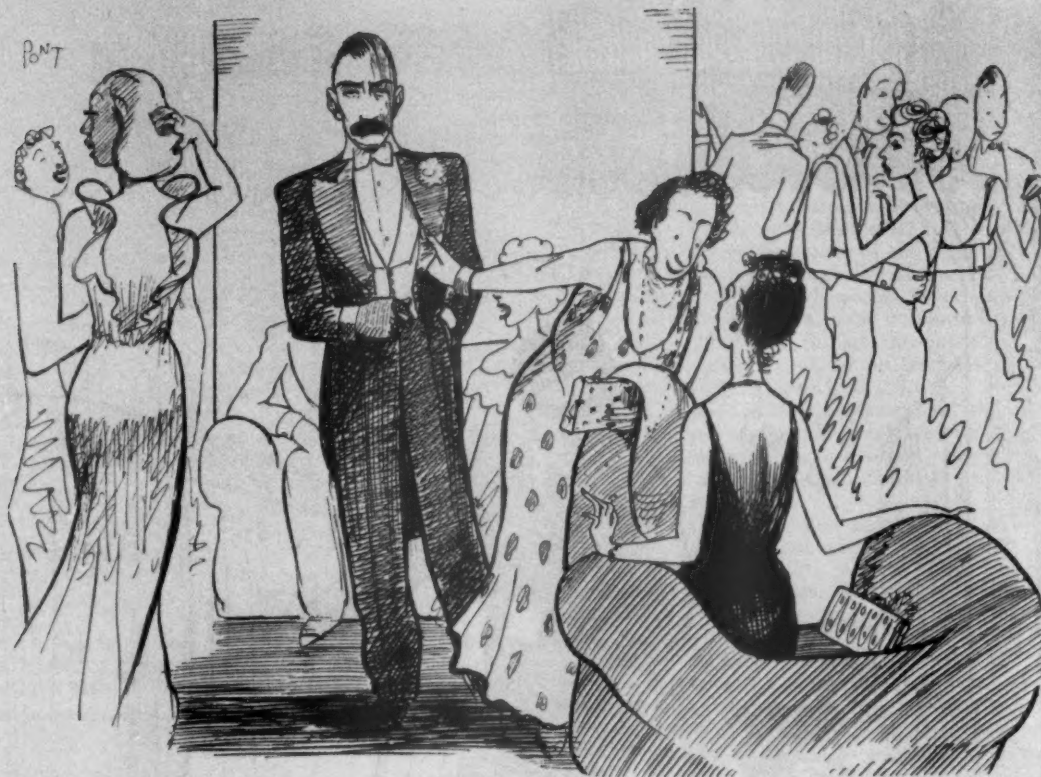
Headings in "The Scotsman."

Most unsuitable.



MISSING THE MARKET

Porter Morrison. "I'm afraid we've lost it, Mum!"



"MR. SPARKS, DEAR . . . LONGING TO MEET YOU."

Making Money

DARLING JOAN,—Here is a thing I would like to write to *John Bull* about and expose it; however, that would probably become too complicated, so I will fall back on you, and if ever you find yourself in a house without central heating, just think about this and it will obviate the necessity.

Do you remember a girl called Sylvia Blenks, with a sweet nature and rather a difficult profile? She is the sort all one's aunts simply love—no make-up, natural nails, and makes a home about her wherever she goes with a bright smile and a few simple flowers in a dish. A girl that mothers are delighted when their sons take out, with no sex-appeal whatever and eight hundred a year of her own. Altogether rather winsome and nauseating and without an ounce of natural vice, for ever cherishing her old parents and never thinking of wanting a flat of her own in London, and

as honest as the day, you'd think; but no.

Well, the Blenkses live near Rosie in Worcestershire and when I was staying there R. had a letter from Sylvia Blenks saying, Have you anything you can send me for my Bazaar? So R. and I devotedly cast about for something, and she decided there was far too much spinach in the garden so would send some for the Produce Stall, but the *pièce de résistance* was a hat she had bought and instantly thought better of. I tried it on and had quite a look of Katherine Hepburn in it. Rosie apparently thought so too because she said, I think we had better send it to the Bazaar. After all, it is for charity. After I'd taken another look at myself in it in a rather better light I thought perhaps she was right, and what a noble sentiment. At the last minute Rosie wavered over the spinach, because the gardener's brother said he could get a price for it, but her better nature prevailed, because, as she says, the Blenks have some very good shooting.

Well, R. and I, in a very non-attached way, actually went to this Bazaar, which was in the Village Hall, so several people caught pneumonia, which has since proved fatal, as they say on the wireless. I meanwhile had a faint plan of mingling with the crowd and purchasing the said hat, but casting about for the parent Blenkses to give them a few words of greeting I came upon the girl, looking what one's aunts would call natural and unassuming and what I should call distinctly furtive.

Well, Sylvia, I said, where are your parents? Daddy is sailing, she replied. He has taken six stammering boys for a cruise in his yacht. What a clever move, I said; they won't be able to answer back when he says Peak up the halyards aft there. At that she gave a sad sweet smile and began to talk about bringing gleams of sunlight into drab lives, so I quickly said, Where is your mother? and she said, In Switzerland with dear old Cousin Claudia in a place called *Ventre-à-Territet*, so historical.



"LOOK! MRS. FERRIBY-JONES IS OUT AGAIN TO-DAY."

Well, as you know, suspicion is utterly foreign to my nature, more foreign it could not be, but I did rather ask myself, Would flesh and blood go to the trouble of having a Bazaar when its old parents were not there to egg it on? And to lend colour to this view the hat had already been sold. However, with my usual rush of generous feeling I was quite glad the thing was a success, and what a moment it would be in S. Blenks's life when she handed over a nice fat sum to the Church Bells or someone. I wish I knew a cynical piece of Latin to put in here, but even I am not all that cultured.

Well, the days sped past, and on Thursday my visit drew to a close, and Rosie, after making certain I had tipped the housemaid, drove me into Leominster to catch the train, when who should we see upon the platform but Sylvia Blenks in a brand-new suit. Her luggage was covered with festive labels and she had Rosie's hat on: I could see R.'s blood-pressure going up at 100 m.p.h.

The doctor's wife, who always knows everything, was at the bookstall buying a copy of *Answers*, so R. and I thronged round her and said, What's this, what's this, what's this? Oh, didn't you know, she replied; Sylvia has made fifty-seven pounds from the Bazaar and is going on a Blue Mediterranean Cruise in a De Luxe Cabin. What about the Charity? said Rosie; but at that moment in came the train and the doctor's wife left us to meet her little nephew, and S. Blenks stepped merrily into a first-class carriage. Rosie, I said, what did that letter of hers say? It said,

Will you send me some things for my Bazaar, but of course I thought—My gosh! said Rosie. Her face wore such a look as General Goering's might wear if he were out-maneuvred by Beverley Nichols.

Well, there we both stood upon the platform, registering. Why didn't I think of that one myself? until the train was about to go, when I pulled myself together and said simple faith was better than Norman blood, and Rosie said, Norman Who? Thinking this no moment to reprimand her I said, I've had a wonderful time,

thank you so much, and anyway S. Blenks looks foul in that hat, and cruises are very lower middle class.

But that's not all. Do you know that upon that cruise Sylvia Blenks affianced herself to a perfectly authentic lord with independent means, no mother and a nice house in Kent! Well, really! He'd never even so much as been in prison, let alone divorced. And the moral of that is, Let us by all means keep our hold upon the Mediterranean if even girls like Sylvia Blenks can click upon it.

It all goes to show that Aldous Huxley is plumb wrong and non-attachment is all my eye, because look what happened. R. and I both minus a perfectly good hat, and Sylvia B. plus a perfectly good lord. My dear, how I hope she doesn't survive until the next Coronation!

The Dying Armies

THE hedgerows are wounded,
They bleed red
And all their royal blood will
Soon be shed.

Then will they lie like soldiers,
Stiff and cold,
With no more banners or bright
Shields to hold;

And faces will grow rimed and
Limbs shrink dry,
And solitary spears will
Prick the sky. O. D.



"CURIOUSLY ENOUGH, MY NAME IS PAUL JONES."

Assistant Masters : Are They Insane ?

(Further extracts from the private papers of A. J. Wentworth, assistant master at Burgrove Preparatory School, now awaiting trial in gaol.)

Tuesday. Every mathematics master dreads the day when he will have to explain the Theorem of Pythagoras to boys who have never met it before. Term after term I get this same feeling of helplessness. The whole thing is ridiculous. With co-operation and proper attention even a dull form should be able to grasp the principles involved and the main lines of the proof in an hour's good hard work; knowledge of the construction will come with practice. But IIIA do not co-operate. They are too prone to let their minds wander, to be led astray by what are from the point of view of geometry only side-issues, to make, as I am always telling them, difficulties instead of going straight at the task and getting it done. It is not that they are lazy. That I could deal with, for I come down like a ton of bricks on idleness in any shape or form. It is rather, I think, a failure to understand the importance of what it is we are trying to do.

"This morning," I said to them, "we are going to prove that the square on the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares on the other two sides."

"Is that a likely thing to happen?" Mason asked.

I told the others to be quiet and asked Mason what he meant.

"I mean is a right-angled triangle likely to have a square on its hypotenuse?"

"I'm afraid I don't quite follow you, Mason," I said. "If I draw a right-angled triangle on the board and then draw a square on the side opposite the right angle it has got a square on its hypotenuse. The question whether it is likely to have such a square does not arise."

"Not on the board, Sir, no. But I meant in real life. I mean if real-life triangles don't have squares on their hypotenuses there wouldn't be much point in proving that they are equal to whatever it is they are equal to, would it, Sir?"

"You mean 'would there,' you chump."

"Be quiet, Etheridge," I said.

"I see what Mason means, Sir," said Hillman. "I mean it would be a pretty good fluke if a triangle had squares on all its sides at once, wouldn't it, Sir?"

"There is no question of a fluke about it," I said, beginning to lose patience. "Now attend to me, all of you." I then drew on the board a right-angled triangle ABC, and on the sides AB, AC and BC proceeded to construct squares ABDE, ACFG and BCHJ respectively.

"What is there funny about that, Atkins?" I asked when I had finished.

"Nothing," he said.

"Then why laugh?"

It is a constant vexation to me that these boys seem to be amused at nothing at all. I do not want them to be glum and dispirited of course; there are times when we all have a good laugh together and no harm is done. But this inane giggling at nothing simply holds up the work of the set. I gave Atkins a sharp warning and turned to Mason.

"Now, Mason," I said, "that wasn't very difficult, was it? My triangle's got squares on each of its sides."

"My canary's got circles under its eyes," sang a voice, and there was an immediate outburst of laughter at this piece of downright impertinence.

"Was that you, Williamson?" I demanded sternly.

"No, Sir."

"Then who was it?"

There was no reply.

"Filthy Dick passed the window just then, Sir," suggested Clarke, who sits by it. "It must have been him."

"He," said Etheridge.

"You shut up, Etheridge. You don't know everything. Who said the Virgin Queen was Victoria last exams?"

"Clarke," I cried, "you will come and see me at the end of the period. And you too, Etheridge. I will not have these interruptions."

"He meant the gardener's boy," explained Mason. "We call him Filthy Dick because he never washes. You should see his neck."

"Never mind that now, Mason. The point is, Are you prepared to admit that this figure on the board is a triangle with squares on each of its sides?"

"I suppose so, Sir. Only it looks more like three squares joined together now, with a space in the middle."

"Very well, Mason," I said wearily. "Let us put it that when three squares have their corners touching in such a way that the space enclosed between them is a right-angled triangle, the largest square is equal to the sum of the two smaller squares. Will that satisfy you?"

"All right by me, Sir," said Mason.

"Anything to get rid of the hypotenuse," said Anderson.

I threw my chalk into a corner and went quietly to my desk.

"You will all," I said, "open your books and copy out the construction and proof of the Theorem of Pythagoras. Any boy who has not finished when the bell rings will complete the work in his spare time and show it up to me during break to-morrow morning. I am thoroughly dissatisfied with the behaviour of the whole set. Unless there is a decided improvement in the next few days you will find yourselves in pretty serious trouble. Now get on with your work in silence. Well, Atkins, what is it?"

"I think Sapoulos is crying again, Sir."

The Greek boy Sapoulos is a source of continual worry to me. The slightest thing seems to upset him. Naturally one makes allowances, as he is a stranger in a strange land and may often feel rather lonely, but it is quite ridiculous that he should break down over the most trivial matters in the way he does. I have tried being kind to him but it only seems to make matters worse, and I daresay what he really needs is a little sternness and discipline. Something to stiffen him up. On this occasion I told him not to be so silly and asked him what the Spartans at Thermopylae would have thought of such a cry-baby.

I had forgotten, until Mason asked me what the Spartans did at Thermopylae, that none of my IIIA boys knows any Greek history. I told him how Leonidas and his gallant three hundred held a mighty Persian host at bay for days and finally died at their post rather than surrender.

"What were the Persians up to?" asked Etheridge.

I told him of Xerxes' plans to conquer Greece, and, as the boys were obviously interested, went on to describe the marshalling of the great army, the digging of the canal at Athos, the lashing of the Hellespont with chains and the building of the bridge of boats, and how Xerxes wept to think that of all his host not one man would be alive when a hundred years had passed by. I had got Xerxes as far as Therma, where the river Echeidorus was drunk dry, when to my great disappointment the bell rang. I think the boys were disappointed too, for they asked me quite eagerly to go on with the story another time.

To-morrow we must have a real go at Pythagoras. I might begin perhaps by telling them something of the man himself and his position in the hierarchy of Greek philosophers.

H. F. E.

More Clerihews



Alexander of Macedon
Became gloomy and taciturn
When they told him at the "Blue Lion"
That he couldn't have any more Chian.



When a photograph of Attila
Appeared in *The Tatler*
The Huns were all delighted,
And the editor was knighted.



Sir Edward Burne-Jones
Was usually Mistah Bones
And imitated a German taking soup
In the Pre-Raphaelite Minstrel Troupe.



"Gentlemen," said Burns,
"Before the meeting adjourns
I think the least we can do
Is to declare that we are nae fou." E. C. B.



"WELL, FOR MY PART I PREFER HAMFSTEAD TO SAINT JOHN'S WOOD EVERY TIME."

Mr. Mafferty Goes Glandular

"I was wrong," said Mr. Mafferty. "It wasn't the tobacco destroyed me at all so much as me endocrine glands. I wouldn't say I'd be goin' back to me careless use of the wicked weed—indeed it's four weeks now, no less, since I touched a tobacco-pipe; an' may the Saints preserve me sanity an' temper! Notwithstandin', it's me ductless glands, or some of them, is the main mischief, me doctor tells me, an' he an expert on the queer contrivances.

"An' that's a shatterin' thought,

Mr. Heather, for wasn't the great Napoleon himself brought low by one half of a little endocrine gland the size of a young pea, an' it refusin' duty at the latter end? It wasn't Wellington at all, nor the British soldier neither, but the Emperor's pituitary that saved the world; an' why should the like of meself be lookin' for kinder treatment from the ductless glands than Napoleon Bonaparte, an exceptional feller, they tell me?

"That's not history, you say? but it's the truth. Maybe you've never studied the fine book I read in me bed on *The Glands Regulatin' Personality*, written by Mister Louis Berman an' published in New York by the Mac-

millan Company. Maybe you're not as familiar with the endocrines as I am meself. Maybe in your purrin' ignorance you couldn't tell a pre-pituitary from an adrenal medulla, an' the two of 'em lyin' on a plate before you? Ah, well, hold your mind open an' let me fill the void with information an' elevatin' matter.

"First, let you put away annythin' you ever thought before concernin' souls an' spirits, an' right an' wrong, an' good characters an' bad, an' will-power an' responsibility, an' the like of that. There's no soul or spirit, it seems: there's the ductless glands only, an' they controllin' the destiny of Man. There's no free will nor Fate neither: there's no crime nor credit; there's only chemical secretions from the little fellers I've mentioned already; an' if the mixture's wrong it's up the spout you are, or down the drain as the case may be.

"Yes, Mr. Heather, you're a packet of chemicals, no more; an' if you'll tell me the structure an' condition of your glands I'll relate your past history an' your future besides. Let me look, now, at your Adam's apple, for that's the situation of your thyroid gland, an' that's the engine of your growth an' energy, an' quick thinkin', an' business drive. It's two maroon-coloured masses astride the windpipe, close to the larynx, an' containin' iodine. Call no man lazy from this out, Mr. Heather, but say he suffers from thyroid deficiency. An' blame no man for his little trips to Brighton, for that's the unconscious urge of the Briton to fill his tanks with iodine from the ocean an' equip himself for the battle of existence. It's a queer small Adam's apple you have, by the way; but no matter, you can buy thyroxin from the doctor an' become an early riser for a few guineas.

"I wouldn't bet about your pituitary gland, Mr. Heather, for it's hidden away behind the root of the nose. It's the size of a pea, it's in two parts, like a méringue, the pre-an' the post-, an' it's greyish-yellow in colour; but it's the gland of intellectuality, an' imagination, an' mathematics, an' the maternal instinct, an' memory, an' philosophy, an' science, an' God knows what besides. Napoleon's pre-pituitary was grand, but his post-pituitary was insufficient, an' that's the reason why he marched to Moscow, his judgment failed him, an' he turned to fat. If it was to-day, I'm thinkin', the doctors would have fed the poor Emperor with pituitrin, an' he'd have won the Battle of Waterloo.

"There was nothin' wrong with Napoleon's adrenals, for the adrenals

is the glands of combat, the glands of emergency an' stress an' strain. You'll find them close above the kidneys, Mr. Heather, one on the port side of the abdomen an' the other to starboard. You'll know them easy, for it's the shape of a cocked-hat they are, an' a kind of a yellow colour; an' they secrete adrenalin accordin' to requirements. The runnin' rabbit has a queer small strip of an adrenal, but the chargin' bull has a great one. Man has a bigger one than anny other animal—an' why would he not, in this dark world of danger an' perplexity? But, man or tabby cat, 'tis adrenalin that floods the body when the enemy comes round the corner, an' lights the eye, an' stands the hair on end. The cat, maybe, has good reserves of the stuff, even the London cat that walks in a world of dogs. But if there's too many shocks an' strains the reserves is exhausted at the latter end: an' that's the sad way of sedentary man, they say, with his work an' worry an' noise, an' improper feedin', an' alcohol, an' smokin', an' Europe an' the income-tax. That's the road to adrenal insufficiency, Mr. Heather, an' me doctor says the whole nation is sufferin' the same.

"Do you ever find, Mr. Heather, you're not quite sure if you're right? Do you feel now you wouldn't bet a finger you know what's best for the peace of Europe? Do you begin to doubt if you could save the world, an' you a dictator? An' do you wonder sometimes if the world's worth savin'? You do? Well, that's a bad sign—that's a terrible sign. An' do you put off answerin' your foolish letters till the next day, or maybe week? Do you find you're vacillatin' when they ask you to answer for the Guests? Do you feel you wouldn't care if you never made a speech again? Do you nurse wild fancies of the income-tax at seven-an'-six, an' is it depressed you are to

contemplate the like? Do you wilt a little at the thought of work, an' wonder if you've passed your prime? You do? Well, that's adrenal insufficiency. But be aisy in your mind. Let you keep your bed for a space, an' let the doctors feed you with orange-juice an' iron, an' phosphorus an' lime, an' calcium, an' anny other minerals is handy, an' adrenalin itself, maybe, an' you'll be the old roarin' tiger in a month or two.

"Well, there's more endocrines I could mention yet, but them's the Big Three—Mr. Pituitary, Mr. Thyroid, an' Mr. Adrenal. Them, as Mr. Berman says, is the Board of Directors, with Mr. Liver, an' Mr. Brain the Chairman. They're all important an' all responsible; an' if annyone of them weakens it's bad for the firm: an' if you could regulate them all you could make anny man what you wanted. Indade, I hope me fine doctor will not overdo it, for I wouldn't wish to wake up one mornin' an' find meself a prize-fighter.

"Sure, 'tis in its infancy still, but 'tis a fearful an' a fascinatin' science. I'm thinkin' in the time to come you'll be able to walk into anny chemist's an' buy small packets of chastity an' courage: you'll go to your doctor for a dose of memory or judgment or mathematical skill: he'll prick you with a needle an' make you punctual, or determined, or imaginative, or what you will. An' he'll be alterin' the world as well. I know me own fine doctor is itchin' to get the Cabinet in a corner an' take a tinker at their adrenals an' thyroids. Germany's likewise—but the other way, for they've too much adrenal, I'm thinkin', an' not enough pituitary, like the Emperor Napoleon. Maybe if we could get the Governments of all the world together an' regulate their ductless glands we'd have peace an' quiet an' reason in the world, if it was only till the next elections."

A. P. H.



GREEN FINGERS

Whist Drive

THE room is absolutely packed for the first game of the season,
And they had difficulty in finding a place for me,
But here I am at last, sitting with the postman,
And Miss Mithers from the shop, and James Blogg, the
cowman.
The postman has dealt, standing, and with a majestic action,
Throwing the cards one by one on to the small round table;
And, one by one as he dealt, James Blogg picked up the cards
in his hand,
Placing them into suits, frowning or clicking his tongue.
The bamboo table rocks as the postman settles into his
place again
And Mr. Gower, the M.C., ringing a small bell,
Announces in a loud voice: "SPEDES."
Miss Mithers leads the ace of hearts, and then the king;
And then, when she has led the queen, there is a wonderful
moment for James Blogg.
From the extreme left of his hand, carefully, in a great swoop
He lays the two of spades on the trick.
We all exclaim "Well done!" and are delighted—
Miss Mithers, his partner, more than anyone.
And now there is a tense impressive pause, and James
Blogg ponders,
And at last, with infinite caution, he plays the three of
diamonds,
And my partner, the postman, takes it snappily with his ace
And returns the lead to James. . . .
Soon we have exhausted the diamonds and the score is
three-three—
A close contest.
Miss Mithers leads a small club and I play the ace
And then lead the king.
Five-three; we lead, and the postman has another club
ready
To put on my queen;
Only unfortunately I haven't got her, so I lead trumps.
Everyone is so staggered that the postman takes the trick
with the seven,

And then he finishes off the clubs. It is six-four,
Because, to everyone's surprise, it was not I but Miss
Mithers
Who had the queen of clubs.
And now we have got to play trumps because there is
nothing else.
A little tentative now, Miss Mithers lays the ten on the table;
James Blogg plays the king, and the postman, exclaiming
that James has played too soon,
Hurls a queen into the m  le.
There is nothing left for me but to play the ace.
We have beaten them, so there is nothing more to be done
really
Except to locate the jack of spades, which the postman
Cunningly conceals in his sleeve,
And brings out on the last trick, amid applause,
Eight-five. We have only just done it, the postman says
handsomely
As he licks his pencil to sign my card,
"Cards was very easy balanced, no trumpin'."
Miss Mithers says her hand was quite a picture-gallery at
one point.
We let ourselves brood over the last five minutes. . . .
And now the bell rings and our little party breaks up.
The postman, bowing, makes off up the room; I move down;
And we leave Miss Mithers and James Blogg to collect
their thoughts
For the defeat of others
In the next hand.

Finance in the Balkans

Or, Romanescu Home From the Sea

THE handset of the telephone quivered visibly as I held it
and the impression flashed through my mind that the
Exchange had rung up to let me know that their building
was collapsing. Then in the roaring and crashing I began
to distinguish the accents of my old friend Captain
Romanescu.

"Hollo! Is that you? How are you? I have sold the ship.
Sure. She is sunk now in Gorama Bay. About four miles
north-east of Paragonna Light, I think. Sure. It is very
good."

Concern for the telephone, which was beginning to
develop surface cracks, restrained me from questioning him.
I said that we must meet soon and that he must tell me
all about it.

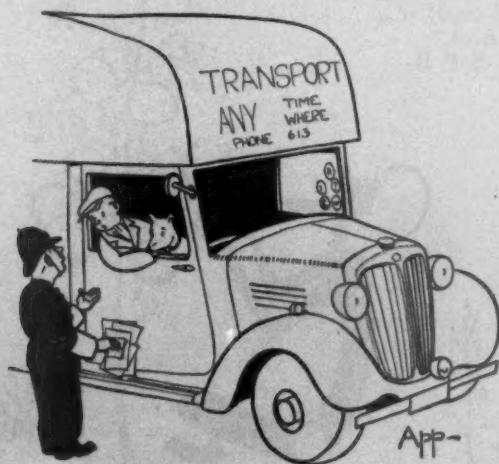
"Sure. I come now to Friars Marston to see you. Often
I have liked to come before. I come in the taxi motor-car.
Sure. It is all right. I have plenty monny in many banks."

Having absolved ourselves from liability to attend for tea
at the Vicarage, we were ready for him when he arrived.

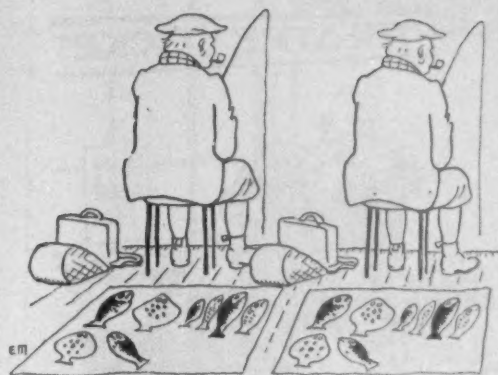
"I have pedd the taxi," he shouted from the gate. "It
is right, eh? You are not Governor here? If you come to
my farm in Tlesti you will not pay the taxi. My brother is
Governor and they will not ask you. They think perhaps
you will mekk trouble sometimes. It is very nice to see you."

"And now," he said, when we had settled down, "I will
tell you about the ship. It is very interesting."

"You know Buratz? It is seaport of Dardania, also
capital. In Buratz they know me very well for a long time.
In the sommer I am sitting in the big hotel in Buratz,
English Dive, with Chief of Police. A man called Safani
he comes up to speak to me. This man is very big merchant
in Buratz, with many dancing-halls and big exporting, also
he has contract for collecting the Costoms sometimes."



"AND NOW LET ME SEE YOUR DOG-LICENSE."



TWINS

"Safari says to me, 'How much do you want for your ship?'"

"'Fifteen thousand sterling,' I say.

"'For fifteen thousand sterling,' he say, 'you can have Buratz, also the king. But this is not funny. This is serious government business. I tell you how we can mekk it. We will give you fifteen thousand sterling in opium at one-and-a-quarter sterling per kilo of morphine content. You have many good friends in the English Government. You can sell in England and mekk good profit.'

"It is like this," Captain Romanescu explained. "In Balkania, in Dardania also, I am big man. When I speak there about my friends in England I most speak a little big or maybe they think I am small-time ship's master. So maybe when I speak about you I say you are Sir Samuel Hoare, and so on.

"'What the damn!' I say to Safari. 'This is very Dardanian business. It is not respectable. How can I go to my friends in the English Government with such propositions? How will Sir Samuel Hoare think if I say to him, 'I have some opiums for us to smuggle and mekk big profits'? He will look at me and say, 'Hell! How do you think I am? White Sleff?' I would be ashamed. You do not understand. In English Government they are very strict.'

"Safari say, 'That is a pity because we have not much sterling in Dardania. You will not tekk Yugo-Slav internal dinars at blackbourse rate? No, I do not suppose. Maybe we can give you some sterling and some other monny.'

"After we talk much he say he will give me seven thousand sterling and also plenty other money—Bulgarian, Yugo-Slav, Balkanian, Roumanian and so on—for perhaps quarter-of-a-million sterling paper. It is worth two-three thousands sterling if you know. I say, 'Very well, I will sell the ship.' Then Safari explain for me the Dardanian Government have sold many guns and ammunitions for the Spanish Government and most have ship under the Balkanian flag to deliver this cargo. Also he say I most tekk the guns to Valencia as master.

"'What!' I say. 'This is very dangerous business. Suppose General Franco come and blow up the ship—what next?'"

"Safari say it is all right. They have mekk precaution for such. They have sold the guns also to General Franco,

but not for so much monny, so if General Franco capture the ship it is all right: just throw the other papers overboard. In the end I say I will do it for three hundred more sterling.

"Soon in two-three months I have check up all the monny except some blocked 1931 *tekans* in State Bank of Balkania which are very bad because Director-General of this bank has built many houses all the time with it and you most not mekk him sell the houses because his uncle is Minister of Finance. So we load up and start the voyage. It is very good weather and soon we are near the Spanish coast when suddenly there is a Franco ship. So I chock all the other papers overboard and I hail him: 'Hollo! This is good luck. We have some ammunitions for Malaga.' He says, 'Very good. I will send armed guard on board to protect you.'

"Not long after there comes Government aeroplane and he see the Franco ship escorting us. He swoop down and he try to bomb us and he miss. He come and he swoop lower down and he miss again. The Franco officer with me we laugh very much because he say these Government aeroplanes have Russian practice bombs and cannot explode. Then he swoop down once more and he strock the mast a little and he fall in the sea. The Franco officer and me we laugh so much I forget the reef Madonna della Villa Santa, according of the Admiralty chart, and we strock her very full speed. I back her off, but she sink in maybe fifty fathoms. It is a pity. But it is very nice day and not so far from shore for the boats.

"On shore the Franco authorities are very cross because some of this monny they have paid to Dardania is very good; but the Franco officer he speak for me and tell everybody I am very good chap and it cannot be help such perils of the sea. And so soon I can come to London.

"You do not know someone who will like to buy four-hundred-thousand note-blocked Iranian *rials* lying in Ottoman Bank in Bushire? No, perhaps not. It is very nice correny and maybe it is worth more sometimes. It is a pity."



"I TOLD HIM YOU WERE OUT, SO HE SAID OH VERY WELL THEN, TELL HIM I DIDN'T CALL."



"YOU MIGHT ASK THEM IF THEY 'VE GOT TWO RINGSIDE SEATS LEFT?"

Red Plush

*Only last evening—
Hush! oh, hush!—
I dined in a restaurant
Done in red plush;
In the middle of London,
'38 London,
Still in red plush.*

Plush! And there gathered the ghosts of Victorian Graces
With the whisper of skirts
And the rustles
Of brave little bustles,
The fair little flirts
And the plain little prudes of the past,
All thinking, "Oh, amn't I fast
To be going to restaurants—restaurants, dear, of all places!"

Fast! Not a one of them smoked or drank stronger than
water
Or made-up at all;
Hair-dressing
Was downright depressing,
And frocks you could call

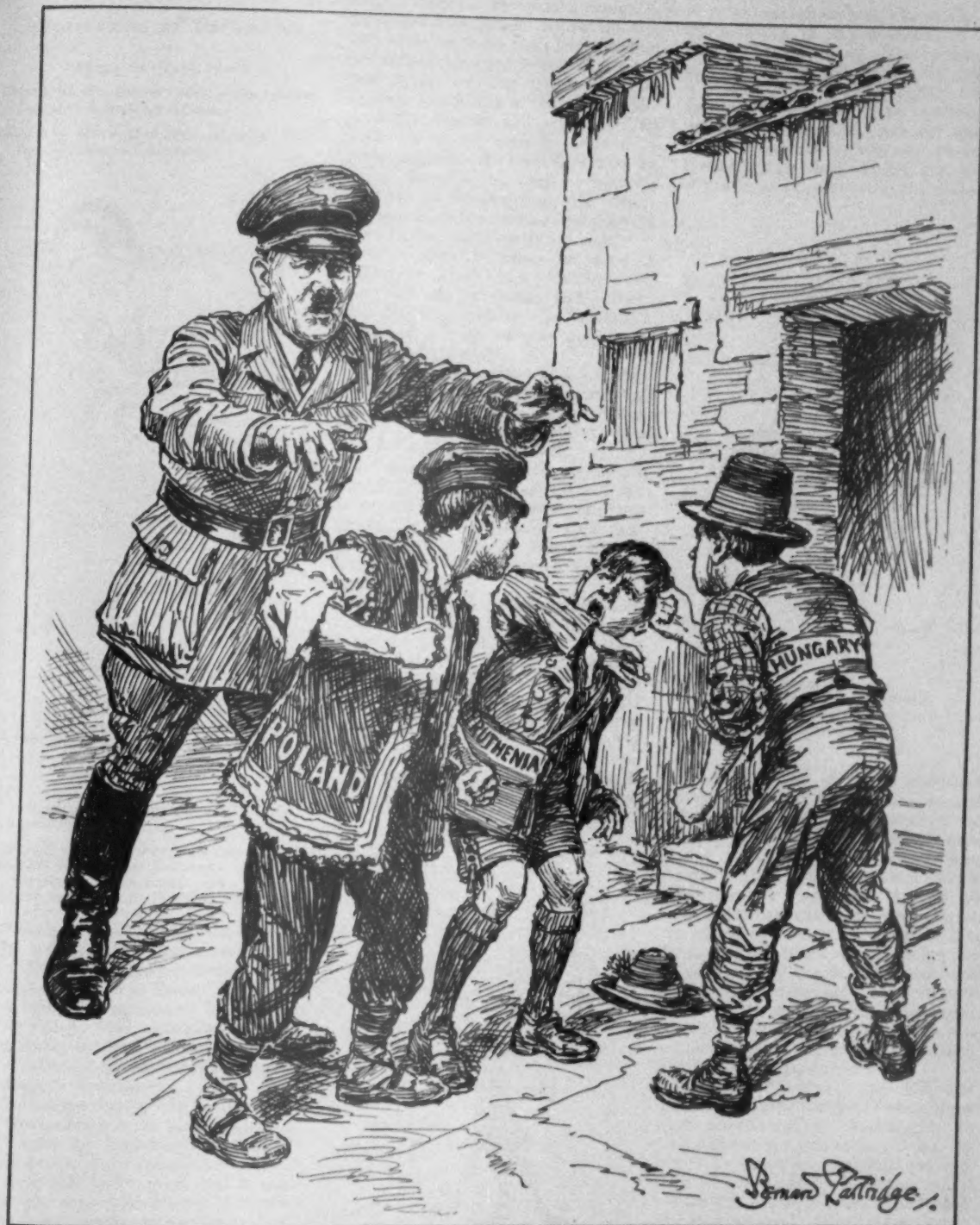
Pretty frumpy; they talked without swears,
Without shrieking; they sat on their chairs,
Each solemn and stiff as a poker, as mother had taught her.

Yet I thought there was quality there and poise and
discreetness

And manners and style,
And their blushes—
To match with my plushes—
Were something worth while. . . .
Stodgy and slow, would you say,
In the cocktails and crush of to-day?
Maybe; but sweet—ay, bless my old heart, of a sweetness!

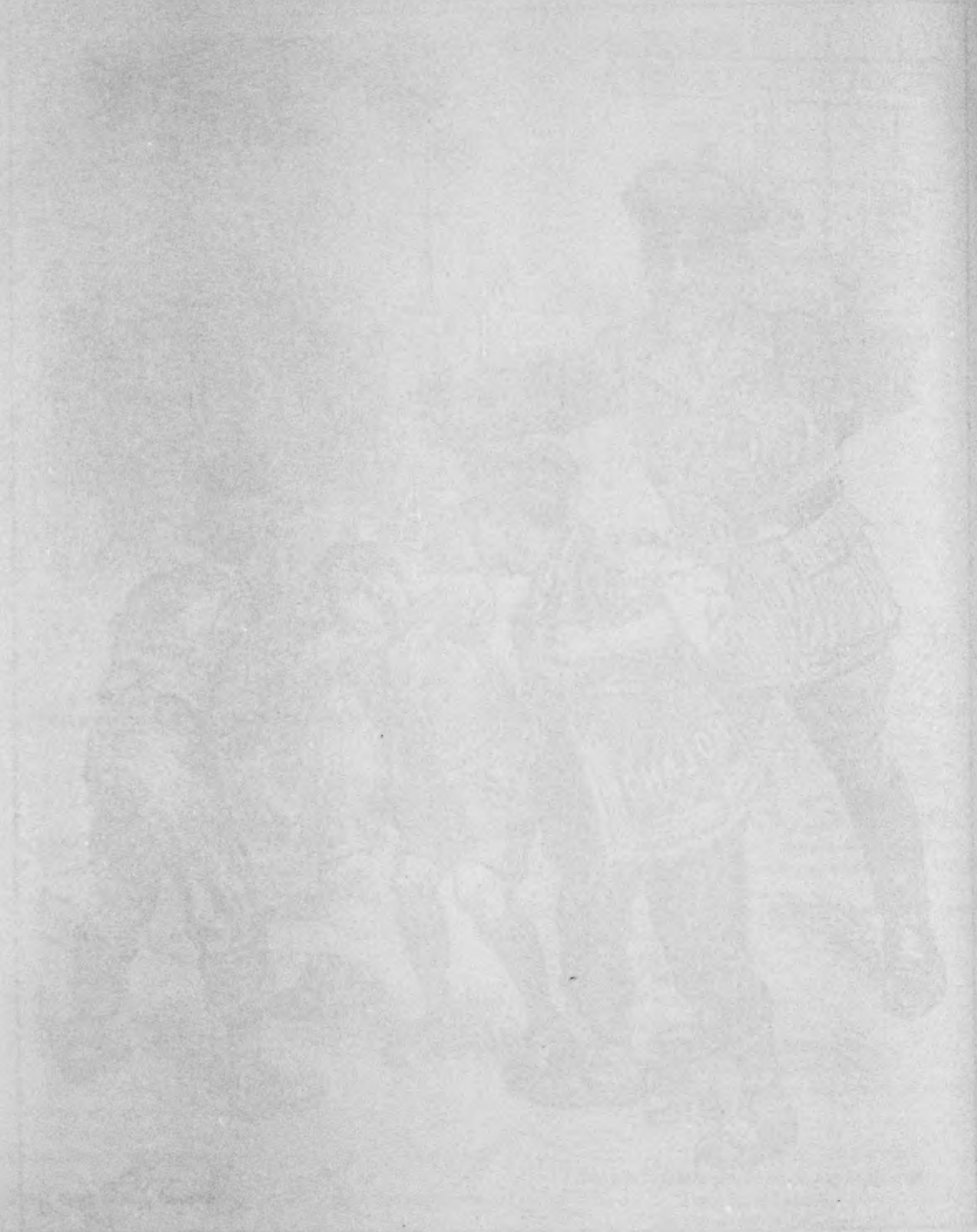
*If everyone knew
They were there, what a rush
There would be on my restaurant
Done in red plush;
In the centre of London,
Chromium London,
Saxophone London,
A.R.P. London—
Still in red plush!*

H. B.



THE NEW PROTECTOR

Herr Hitler. "I can't stand by and see a poor little Czecho-Slovakian being bullied."



RECEIVED NOV 1911

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES COLLEGE PARK MARYLAND

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, November 28th.—Commons: Debate on Special Areas.

Tuesday, November 29th.—Lords: Various Measures Advanced.



THE THINKER

(After the statue by Rodin)

"It was necessary to have some sort of thinking staff for our industrial problems."
MR. CARTLAND.

Commons: Criminal Justice Bill considered.

Wednesday, November 30th.—Lords: Debate on League Reform.

Commons: Debates on Export Trade and A.R.P. Medical Plans.

Monday, November 28th.—In answer to Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON and others the P.M. reported that everything had gone off very well in Paris. There had been complete agreement on general policy but no fresh commitments had been made, nor was this country liable to be called on for another expeditionary force to France.

The Labour Party, who protest that the Government have played them a dirty trick by including the Special Areas Act in the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill, had a good deal to say about the prolonged misery of South Wales and Durham. In particular they criticised the lack of control over the location of new industries.

Mr. GEORGE HALL pointed out that while a Commission was sitting on this vital question, the damage was being

done. Out of one thousand and eighty-three factories opened during the last two years, no fewer than four hundred and seventy-one had been permitted to add to the existing jam of Greater London. And later in the evening Mr. ANEURIN BEVAN was very scathing about a society which allowed a great capitalist like Lord NUFFIELD to dump factories in such prosperous districts as Birmingham, for which workers from the Special Areas would have to forsake their own homes.

Mr. CARTLAND asked for a staff which, relieved of administrative worries, could just think; and in reply Mr. BROWN, quoting Sir MALCOLM STEWART, was against the compulsory location of industry.

Tuesday, November 29th.—Their Lordships, bird-lovers to a man when caught without a gun in their hands, made things safer and more comfortable for wild geese and duck.

At Question-time in the Commons Sir JOHN SIMON, in answer to Mr. BOOTHBY, took the unusual step for a Chancellor of announcing that next year he would ask the House to give him further power to borrow for re-armament.

Sir SAMUEL HOARE claimed that his Criminal Justice Bill was the most comprehensive penal measure which had ever come to the House, and that it was based not on theory but experience. This showed that as a result of more humane methods the number of second convictions was constantly diminishing.

The first main chapter, dealing with young offenders, aimed at a reduction

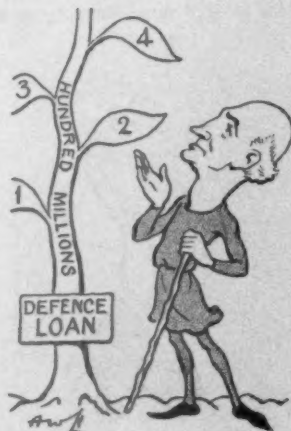
in prison sentences and, ultimately, at the abolition of imprisonment at the hands of magistrates. The minimum age for imprisonment was to be raised to sixteen, and for the slightly older various checks were to be instituted; remand centres were proposed where those between seventeen and twenty-three could go while waiting, instead of to prison as at present; in the place of



Ding, dong, bell,
"The Cat's" in the well!
Who threw it o'er?
Little SAMMY HOARE.

corporal punishment (to be abolished altogether, except for the most serious offences in prison) there were to be compulsory attendance centres where young delinquents would have to turn up and work at times when their friends were amusing themselves; hostels, to be called Howard Houses, were to be set up where they could be made to live for a period up to six months, going out to work during the day as usual; and courts of summary jurisdiction were to be allowed to impose Borstal sentences. About this last reform Sir SAMUEL admitted that the experts were divided, but he himself favoured it.

The second part of the Bill was directed towards bringing things home more effectively but less roughly to that difficult customer, the old lag. In future he would go to special prisons, from which the Home Secretary could release him before his time if he looked like making good. Other reforms contained in the Bill were the abolition of "penal servitude," "hard labour," "ticket-of-leave" and the name "criminal lunatic." In future Broadmoor would be known as the "State Mental



JACK AND THE BEANSTALK

SIR JOHN SIMON. "I CAN'T SEE IT STOPPING AT THAT FIGURE."



"JUST A MINUTE, FELLOWS, HITLER'S GOING TO MAKE A SPEECH."

Institution," and its occupants not as "criminal lunatics" but as "State mental patients."

Sir SAMUEL is always magnificently clear, even over such complicated ground, and he had the House with him all the way. When the Bill reaches its Committee stage there will be plenty of disagreement over minor points, but this evening's debate showed that the Labour Party were mainly approving, and so were even the sturdier Conservatives, though traditional believers in the medicinal value of a little benevolent knocking about.

Mr. QUINTIN HOGG's maiden speech left a very good impression.

Wednesday, November 30th—The debate in the Lords showed fairly-general agreement with Lord PONSONBY's suggestion that the Government should initiate proposals for a reformed League which, shorn of its present military and political obligations, would at last be representative and act as a permanent body for the discussion and solution of the various problems which lie at the root of international

friction. Lord STRABOLGI dissented flatly, however, from the idea that collective security must be abandoned, and Lord CECIL continued to believe that the League must have force be-

hind it. In reply the FOREIGN SECRETARY admitted that sometimes he would like to see the coercive clauses removed, but on the whole he was against such action.

In the Commons Mr. SUTCLIFFE's motion, calling on the Government to do more for the export trade, which was meeting such ruthless foreign competition, opened a good debate, speakers on both sides of the House agreeing that British marketing methods were out of date.

Later, Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE's motion, asking for a detailed medical scheme for A.R.P., brought from Mr. BERNAYS the information that a hospital evacuation scheme, based on trains and Green Line buses, could have begun work at twelve hours' notice.



OUR BACK-BENCH WHO'S WHO

One of our several military M.P.'s,
Lt.-Col. HENEGAGE sits at ease.

"Thieves who broke into Bertram Mills's Circus winter quarters at Ascot during Thursday night took away a 2cwt. safe. It was empty, except for the company's seal."

The Times.

He must have eaten the fish.

Thanks

"THE Tennis Club Social," said Edith, "is to-morrow evening. I hope you have prepared your speech of thanks for the Cup. It seems ridiculous that you should win the tournament in August and have to wait until December to get the Cup."

"Colonel Hogg had mislaid it," I explained, "or he pretended he had. Actually I expected he wanted to have it standing on his mantel-shelf as long as he could so that he could explain modestly how he won it last year when anybody asked what it was. But I am really worried about my speech to-morrow. I don't know what to say."

"I'll get my scrap-book," said Edith, "and find the meetings for the last six years when the Cup was presented. *The Little Wobbley Gazette* always gives a full report. Here it is. 1933. Johnson-Clitheroe was the winner that year."

In 1933 Johnson-Clitheroe had apparently said that nobody was more surprised than himself when he beat Colonel Hogg in the final, because in his view—(Cries of "No! No!")—Colonel Hogg was a far better player. He (Johnson-Clitheroe) could only attribute his victory to exceptional luck.

In 1934 Entwistle had won, and we found the report of his speech without much difficulty.

"I can assure you all," he said, "that I feel I am taking this Cup under false pretences. I am sure that if Johnson-Clitheroe had been at the top of his form on the day of the final he would have wiped me out completely. I can only hope that next year the Cup will go to a more worthy winner."

The winner in 1935 was Gerald P. Slugg, the Director of a film company a few miles away, who had settled in the village for a time. Mr. Slugg had said that he was not used to speaking in public and he really did not know what to say, except that he felt extremely embarrassed to be accepting a Cup which he felt he in no way deserved, as there were at least ten better players than himself in the Club, and it was just the luck of the draw, and he guessed his win over Colonel Hogg in the final was entirely due to the Colonel slipping on a banana-skin in the club-house just prior to the game, which upset his poise.

Young Edelberry, Miss Wagg's nephew, was the lucky man in 1936. "I feel absolutely ashamed to be taking this Cup," he said, "and I can only attribute my victory to the extreme heat on the day of the final, which

naturally gave a great advantage to the younger man. Even so I could not have won if it had not been for some remarkably lucky net-cord shots which really didn't deserve to go over."

Colonel Hogg, in 1937, attributed his victory entirely to the stars. "When I saw in my morning paper that those born under the sign of Taurus were likely to gain unexpected success during the day," he explained, "I became so confident that I played far better than usual; but even so I could not have withstood the onslaught of my friend Rogerson if he had not been

handicapped by two broken strings and a weak elbow."

Edith tossed the book aside. "You see," she said, "it's quite simple. Modesty is the key-note."

"I suppose so," I said sadly, "but I wish I dared say that I just won because I was the best player in the Club this year. Do you think they'd mind?"

"I don't think they'd ever recover," said Edith, "and it might set a precedent for speaking the truth at public functions that would undermine civilisation."



"LIGHTS BURNIN' BRIGHT AN' I DON'T FEEL WELL."

At the Play

"TRAITOR'S GATE" (DUKE OF YORK'S)

THE action of *Traitor's Gate* extends over the period between April 1534 and July 1535 and is the story of Sir THOMAS MORE's imprisonment, trial and death. The play begins when the heavy clouds have already overcast the sky, and the *More* family circle at Chelsea is harshly broken in on by the King's visitors. *Thomas Cromwell* (Mr. JULIEN MITCHELL), massive, with small eyes and heavy piglike face, says comparatively little, but Mr. MITCHELL makes him extremely formidable. As the action develops we see more of *Cromwell*, and there comes a time when he talks too much, but Mr. MITCHELL starts him off so impressively that there is a good deal of accumulated conviction before, at the very end, we cease to believe in this *Cromwell* at all. *Norfolk* and *Cromwell* enter in this First Act the more ominously for their apparent courtesy, and the First Act very skilfully makes it plain that *More* (Mr. BASIL SYDNEY) is very much more troubled in his mind than his household understand. The characters are made to call each don by his full name when history would be better served by "Master" or "My Lord."

The play moves from Chelsea to Lambeth and from Lambeth to the Tower. Mr. SYDNEY gives a performance which has a double excellence, for he is equally authentic when he shows us a rather young, thoroughly healthy though troubled man at the beginning, and when he shows us a man upon whom a deliberately rigorous imprisonment of over a year has left its mark although it has not shaken his constancy. The dramatist seems to me to deserve the highest praise for the way in which, without ever making her characters, and chiefly *More* himself, speak too openly about the real mainsprings of the great decision which is the story of the play, it is yet quite obvious all the time that the motive is religious. Where it would have been so often easy to have struck an over-intimate, a false or a jarring note, she keeps the language clear, restrained; and though it is highly serious the play is lively and moves through

real conversations and real dialogue without the rhetoric either of the stage or the pulpit. It is true that the play will be most appreciated by those who already understand what it is all about.

come away with a feeling that *More's* importance was chiefly due to his position as an ex-Chancellor, a lawyer and a scholar, and not to the fact that he had by this time made himself one of the chief popular writers on religious doctrine. It was his influence as a writer as much as his legal position which made it seem essential to the new policy of HENRY and CROMWELL that he should be compelled to conform. But his imprisonment is accurately and powerfully represented not as the caging of a dangerous enemy but as deliberate pressure put on a man who was known greatly to relish the good things of life. It was imprisonment and persecution with a purpose, and it broke itself on the secret asceticism of MORE. Mr. SYDNEY, in his impressive performance, has to interpret a man who has left very full records of himself and his state of mind, and it is the measure of his success that even in the final scene, where the dramatist dispenses most completely with the accounts we have and with MORE's religious writings, he can produce an arresting and deep study of his own.

The two daughters—the adopted and the real—*Margaret Clement* and *Margaret Roper*, are played by MARGARETTA SCOTT and SYLVIA COLERIDGE, and *Peg Clement* is brought forward so that of the two she takes rather the larger place. Both are good. Miss SCOTT in particular gives an excellent performance, passing from easy affection to poignant anxiety. Of the minor characters the most difficult to play is that of *Dr. Nicholas Wilson*, a man who was so nearly of the company of FISHER and MORE. Mr. MARTIN-HARVEY interprets him with a delicacy of understanding which is able to convey in the earlier scenes that indecision which is to triumph in the end. The acting throughout is indeed at a high level. Mr. FRANK MOORE's *Cranmer*, for example, also conveys unspoken and unhappy thoughts without there being any need for speech.

This play has, unhappily, its topicality; the conflict between ruthless official pressure and the private sense of what is true or right is not a remote one in the modern world, and *Traitor's Gate* seizes the essentials and shows in one famous instance an interior struggle and a final triumph. D. W.



THE LAMBETH WALK, 1534

Dr. Nicholas Wilson . . Mr. MICHAEL MARTIN-HARVEY
Sir Thomas More . . . Mr. BASIL SYDNEY

They will be a little critical of the emphasis here and there, and may feel that the central issue of a Papal supremacy is too secondary to the non-recognition of King HENRY's divorce; indeed the casual theatre-goer might



THE KING'S MERCY

Thomas Cromwell . . Mr. JULIEN MITCHELL
Sir Thomas More . . Mr. BASIL SYDNEY

"UNDER YOUR HAT" (PALACE)

In the first place Miss CICELY COURTNEIDGE and Mr. JACK HULBERT have come back to the stage together after an interval of seven years, which has seemed longer. In the world of entertainment this is front-page news, for, good as they have been in celluloid, it is ten times more satisfactory to see them in person. There is something about their charm, something which I can only call a quality of inspired charade, which cannot be properly captured in two dimensions; and here they are again at last, one of the best teams of modern times, undimmed in any way. Long may they remain!

This is musical-comedy, and though I heartily agree with those who have regretted that it was not revue, I must admit that when the second half got going, lulled by these two remarkable people into a deliciously uncritical condition, I was enjoying myself far too much to care what it was. The first half is not nearly so good. There are big moments in it, but compared with what comes later it is thinner in every respect. Time has to be wasted at the beginning of any musical comedy in winding up the spring of the story; during the process this one is only moderately funny, not funny enough to justify itself as a frame for the HULBERTS. Fortunately it is the shorter half. After the interval the show gets up a momentum which scarcely flags, even though it is of a generous length.

The story is about a pair of British film-stars who are married to each other, but, as Mr. HULBERT explained later in his speech, it is not to be taken too literally as the kind of thing that happens every day to Miss COURTNEIDGE and himself. Some wretch, bent on the increased discomfort of mankind, has invented a carburettor which will make aeroplanes go faster, higher, further and I have no doubt more noisily than ever before, and this loathsome article has been stolen by the female agent of a foreign power. The Secret Service, looking round for a man with the hard sense which does not always accompany allure, pick on Jack Millet (Mr. HULBERT), who takes on a job made ticklish from the start by the fact that the agent is none other than Carol Markoff (Miss LEONORA CORBETT), a talented vamp who has just been playing

with him in films and in doing so has aroused the jealousy of his wife, Kay (Miss COURTNEIDGE). Spurred on by patriotic zeal, he follows his quarry to the South of France; but what can a

through a bacon-slicer) as personal maid! The answer is very little, being up against a super-spy of the calibre of Mr. FRANK CELLIER's extraordinarily sinister Boris, and hindered by the presence of a friend so evidently *persona grata* at Blandings Castle as Mr. PETER HADDON's George.

The carburettor, hub and focus of the evening, goes its vaporous way, now in a five-pound box of chocolates, now in a little nest scooped out of the solid mass of *Gone With the Wind*, and the Millets follow in its wake, nagging, bungling and bluffing, until virtue, or at least virtue from the strictly British point of view, triumphs. There is a glorious scene at a French airport, where they become entangled with two elderly Poonarisms of the name of *Sheepshanks*, and it is followed by a social cataclysm at a French girls' school, where they impersonate the *Sheepshanks* and attribute an illegitimate daughter to the blameless Colonel. (May I,

perhaps ungratefully, for I laughed immoderately, say it is a pity for Miss COURTNEIDGE to be disguised, however funnily, to the complete exclusion of Miss COURTNEIDGE? She means so much in herself, and Mrs. Colonel might have been any actress who had the wit and the talent to carry her.) There is a scene in which they try to pass themselves off as mechanics, and there is another in which they find themselves in charge of a runaway aeroplane. And there are others—I'm not going to spoil them for you.

They are both, if it needs saying, as good as ever, which means that they combine a mastery of light satiric comedy with a naturalness which has in it so little of the theatre that one is tempted to describe them as very great amateurs. They gain enormously from being together.

Miss CORBETT, Miss MADELEINE GIBSON, Mr. CELLIER and Mr. HADDON fill in the background admirably. Mr. JOHN BYRON's dancing and the RHYTHM BROTHERS' cunning choir are fat plums in the cake. The Chorus is like a sparkling machine. The décor and dresses are not more than average, and the music is about the same. I think the best tune is "Keep It Under Your Hat," and the runner-up, "If You Want to Dance." ERIC.



A LIVELY MIXTURE

MR. JACK HULBERT
MISS CICELY COURTNEIDGE

man do, even if he has encouraging instructions from his Government to go to any length, when he finds his wife already installed (under a frightful red wig and an accent you could put



FILLING THE STAGE

Mrs. Sheepshanks . . . Miss CICELY COURTNEIDGE
Colonel Sheepshanks . . . Mr. JACK HULBERT

National Service

Women of England, what will you do?
Your country is calling, is calling to you.
Hark! Can't you hear the bugles blow,
Women to nurse, women to cook, women to sew?
What do we care if you're rich or you're poor,
We welcome you here through the service door.
What do we care if you're nice or not?
Are you a FANY, Madam, are you a WAT?
Women of England, what will you do?
Your country is calling, is calling to you.
Hark! Can't you hear the bugles blow,
Women to nurse, women to cook, women to sew?

Well, what can you do, Mrs. Tweedie?
I can drive a car!
It must be confessed that I failed in my test,
But there you are!

And what can you do, Miss Brown-Whadham?
I can drive a car!
Though the police, I admit, think my driving's a bit
Too spectacular.

And what, Lady Canfield, can you do?
Me? I can drive a cah!
Any old wheeze, from a Mercedes
To a Lanchestah.

Oh, dear! What can you do, Miss Winter?
I can drive a car!
I once drove alone from St. Marylebone
To the Temple Bar!

Ladies, we thank you on England's behalf
And welcome you here to our regular staff.
You have willingly sacrificed health, wealth and beauty
To do as Old England expected—your duty!
Report every day, if you please, at this station
(We thank you once more for your co-operation),
Before you set off on your chivalrous task
Is there anything, ladies, you feel you must ask?

Yes, by the way, I forgot to say
I often feel a little below par.
I'm sure you will agree it's imperative for me
To drive the very lightest type of car.

By some unhappy chance I have nervous indigestion;
I couldn't drive an ambulance, that's out of the question.
And as I'm the apple of my husband's eye,
If war's declared he'll try to whiak me off to Skye.

I'm eighty-three, and so you see
I can't go out at night;
I've failing eyes, but otherwise
I'm quite all right.

The nation thanks you warmly
And prays it may be found
You are not uniformly
As silly as you sound.
We do not wish to bore you,
We know your time is dear,
But tell us, we implore you,
What he h-ll you're doing here.

Oh, we're beautiful dutiful ladies
Come to do our bit.
We'll slave every day in a wonderful way
And dote on it.

We can't come on Sundays or Fridays or Mondays,
For if it's fine
We go and play golf, or we take our sons off
To the Serpentine.

On Thursdays we go to our bridge clubs
Until it's time to sup;
We give you fair warning on Saturday morning
We don't get up.

We'll tear round the town in our Bentleys
If the chauffeur drives,
But we're awfully sorry we can't work a lorry
To save our lives.

We've not learnt the ways of an engine,
We have never tried;
We lift up the bonnet and gaze in upon it
Mystified.

A gasket, a sump and a piston
We believe are tools,
But we won't crawl about or attempt to find out—
We should look such fools!

A car is so frightfully messy,
Our clothes are easy to soil;
We send all our screws to the man in the mews
Who is drenched in oil.

Trained from our earliest childhood
To be sweetly blah,
We answer your call with no assets at all
But a motor-cah.

V. G.

Two Hundred Years Elapse

As we all sat shouting "Author!", ready to throw our eggs as soon as he appeared, my Aunt Tabitha on her two seats in the middle of the row seemed unwontedly pensive. This was a trick of the light, however, for in no English theatre has she ever yet found it necessary to think. It was not she at all, it was in fact her shortest great-grandfather (next but one) who started the ball of theatrical reminiscence bursting.

"Did you see O'Toole in *Garbage*?" he piped up.

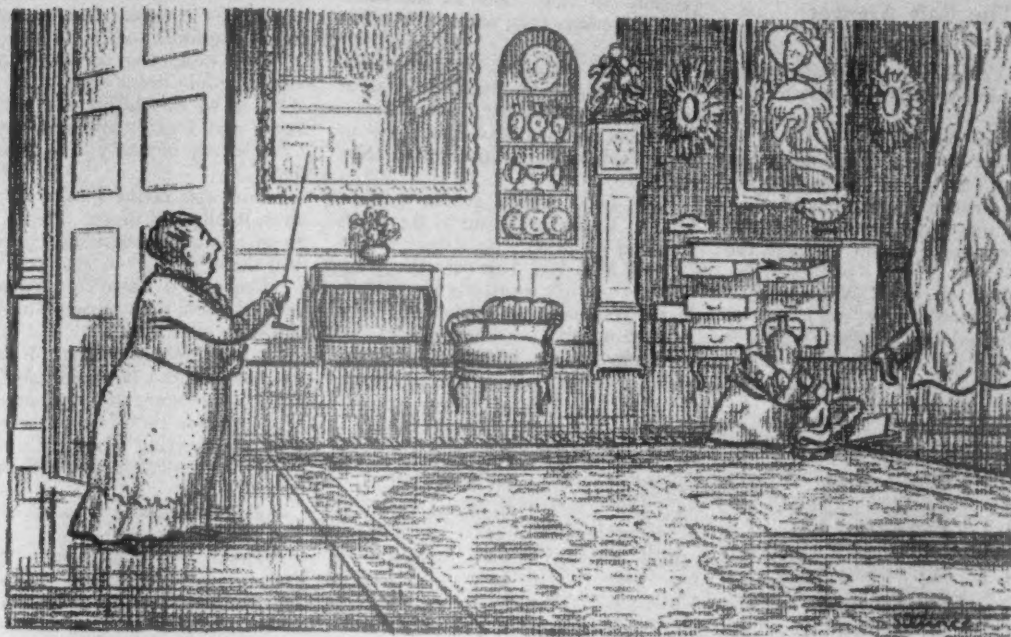
"You mean," said Aunt Tabitha's thin uncle captiously, "did I ever see the great Toole in *O'Garbage*. No, I did not."

"Leave the boy alone," rasped the oldest member of the family, Aunt Tabitha's Great-great-aunt Maud. Owing to her immense age and the fact that she laughs whenever she sees a policeman, she seldom comes out with the rest of us, but keen is not the word for her faculties. Nor is blunt. "What he means," she went on, "is—"

She was interrupted from several places down the row on either side: "The great O'Garb in *Toolage*." "The great Targe in *O'Golob*." "The great Tarlage in *Gooob*." "Stroheim in *The Great Gabbo*." "The great Burbage in—"
"The great Garbo in—"

"I mean what I said," Aunt Tabitha's shortest great-grandfather screamed above the tumult.

Here there was a slight diversion while her bald uncle pushed his way along the row to go out. This was his night for A.R.P. duty: he had to run a small mower over the local sandbags, all of which were now sprouting a fine crop of grass.



"Ov!"

"That lad is worth his weight in putty to the Government," Aunt Tabitha's fat uncle confided to me, but as we were all still vigorously clapping I did not hear him.

"Ah! dear old David Siddons! And the divine Sarah Garrick!" cried Aunt Tabitha's Great-great-aunt Maud suddenly. "You have no such players now. Who is this Donald Duck? Give me St. John Irving in *Hell's Bells*! I may be old-fashioned," she went on with a pitying smile, "and sometimes"—a note of pathos crept into her voice and hastily out again—"I wonder whether it might not be better for those about me if I fell down a coal-hole. But while I have my strength I will fight on," Great-great-aunt Maud said quietly, or as quietly as was consistent with being heard above the roar of the maddened audience, "for the inclusion in Wessex of the kingdom of Mercia and the recognition of the no-third-foul rule in bantam-weight backgammon. It is a simple aim; it is a proud aim; and—and—and—and—"

"Take your foot off the lady's peroration, you big stiff," said Aunt Tabitha's thin uncle to her fat uncle. He did so, and she was able to conclude—

"—and all that."

At this point a strabismic stage-hand descended from a rope in front of the curtain, inspected us all through a telescope, and rapidly withdrew up the rope again.

"He has a look of the great Macready," commented Aunt Tabitha. "Ah! the great Macready! Will any of us ever forget the phenomenal power of the great Macready?"

A man in the row in front turned round and said "If none of you ever do it seems a poor look-out for the rest of us." Ignoring him, my Aunt Tabitha went on with old-world grace (it is not generally known, or believed, that she is the original "Little Old Lady," but she has been dyeing her hair grey and stinking the place out with lavender ever since the song was published): "Why, stap my vitals, the way he said the simplest thing was a revelation. Herbert!"

she called to my Uncle Herbert, "do you remember the wonderful way in which the great Macready spoke that line in *The Disgruntled Female Bull-Fighter*, 'Do I smell a rat, or is it the drains?'"

"Do I not!" said my Uncle Herbert. "'Do I smell a rat, or is it the drains?'" he declaimed, throwing out his arm and knocking five lemon-squashes off an attendant's tray.

"No, no," said my Aunt Tabitha. "He used to say, 'Do I smell a rat, or is it the drains?'—a very subtle point, fellers, suggesting that the drains themselves might be—"

Her thin uncle interrupted, "Nonsense, girl. What he said was far more significant. 'Do I smell—a rat? or—is it the drains?' The dramatic effect of the voice as it sank to a breathless hush on 'drains'—the breath-taking beauty—"

"'Do I!—smell a rat or is it the drains? Ha!'" cried her fat uncle.

"'Do I smell a rat,'" her first great-grandfather was beginning, when her second great-grandfather interrupted, "That was how Irving said it. We thought it a scandalous innovation at the time, but in a very few years we came to realise that that mighty genius had seen more in the line than we could hope ever to perceive unaided."

"I well remember," Aunt Tabitha said, "that one day, when we were sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought—the cast of *Thought* were always pale, we put it down to the bad sausages they used to provide at the old Nickelyceum... Do you remember the pale cast of *Thought* that we used to be sicklied o'er with, Herbert?"

"Do I!" cried my Uncle Herbert. "Dear old pale Dolly!"

"Old Pale Butch!" "Poor old pale Bartolomio!"

Meanwhile the orchestra had struck up the haunting strains of *In a Persian Laundry*, for by a laughable misunderstanding we had all been calling for the author when there was still another Act to come.

R. M.

The Soft Answer

"Miss PIN, the time has come when I really think we'd better have a little talk."

"I should love it."

"The fact is—well, I shouldn't say anything if I didn't—if I wasn't certain that you'd *rather* I spoke frankly."

"Anything, anything in the world. It's so very good of you to spare the time."

"Oh, dear, oh, dear! You see, Miss Pin, one knows how hard you've always worked for the Society, and how anxious you are to keep it all going."

Don't think the Committee don't appreciate all that. But at the same time there *have* been one or two complaints."

"I'm not surprised. I often wish I had had a business training. I seem to myself to be utterly inadequate."

"Don't say that, Miss Pin. I'm sure no one thinks you're inadequate. Not *really*."

"Ah, but I am. I realise it absolutely. I often wake up in the night thinking of it."

"Oh, Miss Pin, I'm sure the Committee wouldn't want you to do that. But if you could answer letters rather more promptly, you know—"

"I ought, I ought indeed. I know

myself that there's a pile of correspondence on my desk that hasn't been touched for a week. One or two quite urgent inquiries too."

"Yes, well, you see— And of course people don't like it. . . ."

"I *do* so absolutely see what you mean, and I can't apologise enough."

"It's a very nice of you to take it like that."

"How else could I take it? I deserve it all, and more. Please, please go on. I'm sure there must be a great deal more."

"I'm afraid there is. There have been a good many complaints about the state of the Hall."

"I know it's shocking. I ought to have seen about it weeks ago."

"And there are never enough chairs. They always have to be brought in after the meeting's begun."

"That really is unpardonable, I know."

"And the minute-book seems to get lost rather often."

"That's my untidiness. Nothing *ever* in its right place. I deserve to lose everything I have in the world, because I never take care of anything."

"I'm sure it's only a question of— And the fact of the matter is, Miss Pin, the members would like rather more organisation with regard to the *leas*."

"I can so understand that. I know the sugar ran out last time, and nothing could have been more unsuccessful than those stale little buns."

"Nothing."

"You can't blame me more than I do myself. I almost feel I ought to be lynched."

"No, no."

"Oh, yes, indeed. Lynched."

"No, it would be enough if you could just try to pull things round a little. For instance, it was most unfortunate that you should have forgotten to send out those notices last week."

"It was unpardonable. And of course it isn't the first time it's happened."

"And there's just one other point—at least I'm afraid there are one or two, really—if you could remember people's right names, Miss Pin?"

"Yes, yes, *yes*. My memory really is appalling—non-existent, one might say. And it isn't only names I forget—it's faces and facts. Everything in the world practically."

"Please don't exaggerate so."

"Exaggeration is another of my failings. I know it's dreadful. I often wonder if I have any good points at all."

"Come, come, come!"

"No, I feel it's true. I'm of no use to anyone. I make a muddle of the



"No, my lady, Sir Godfrey is not hurt. He was fortunate enough to fall on his back."



"I SHOULD LIKE MY OLD MAN TO MEET GOBBLES AND SOME OF 'IS PALS WALKING DOWN THE 'IGH STREET. THERE WOULDN'T 'AVE BE A DUST-UP."

simplest job. I have no tact. I remember nothing whatever. Nobody could be more inaccurate than I am. And I'm deliberately letting the Society go to rack and ruin. I know that perfectly well."

"Then, really, if you feel like that about it——"

"You mean that I ought to be shot?"

"Miss Pin, will you please——?"

"I can only say that I agree. I ought to be shot. Without a moment's hesitation."

"Very well, Miss Pin. Fetch me my husband's gun."

E. M. D.

To a Model Charlady

You do not make me share your woes,

O rare and uncomplaining char!

Your spouse may gamble, drink—who knows?

You do not make me share your woes

Nor flaunt a mind that overflows

With tales of tonsils or catarrh.

You do not make me share your woes,

O rare and uncomplaining char!

Kindness-to-Insects Corner

"When kept in cold storage at seven degrees below zero, the bread will stay fresh for nine moths."—*Sunday Paper.*

Sherry Testimonial

"It was a simple ceremony, with no bridesmaids, best man or reception, the bride and bridegroom having given a sherry party for friends on the previous evening."

Surrey Paper.

"UNBEATABLE BARGAINS . . .

A huge assortment of dinner gongs."
Advt. in Indian Paper.

For ornamental purposes only.



"YES, HE'S ALWAYS THE FIRST ONE IN IN THE MORNINGS."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The First of Civil Servants

THE genially brutal diarist so long familiar to all the world has finally disappeared in *Samuel Pepys—The Saviour of The Navy* (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 12/6). Mr. ARTHUR BRYANT's third volume portrays a heavily-salaried bureaucrat, a man who has perfected a system of technical rebuke, who will stand no nonsense from lord or admiral or politician, who drives even the monarch himself to shuffling excuses for breaches of service discipline. So effective is his control of His Majesty's Navy that a string of some sixty ships of the line, all dropping to pieces at their moorings, with toadstools sprouting on their hulls, is converted in three years' space to an incomparable fighting fleet, administered on principles that have since been fundamentally maintained not only at the Admiralty but in every branch of the Civil Service. This transformation coincided with the last ill-fated attempt at Stuart absolutism, and the well-worn story of the period is here told from the unusual angle of a man whose loyalty to the state outweighed both personal interests and old associations. He refused to desert the infatuated JAMES II. when more conspicuous men were safely crossing to the party of the Prince of ORANGE, and would have used the fleet ruthlessly to prevent the Dutchman's invasion had the admiral in command been equally determined, but when the revolution was accomplished he was no less resolved to hand over his charge intact to the new constitutional leader. One more volume of this fascinating biography is still to come.

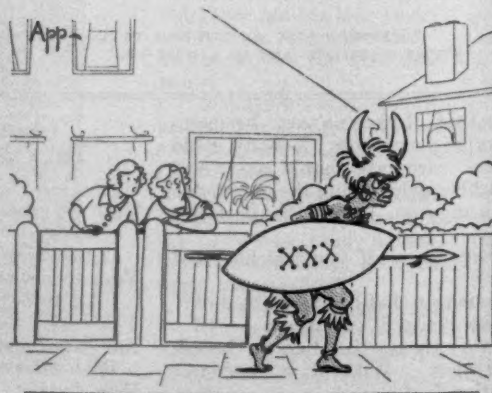
Lawrence Speaking

If *The Letters of T. E. Lawrence* (CAPE, 25/-) bring the man nearer and make him plainer to those who did not know him in the flesh—doing something to dispel that haze of mystery in which his tale has been perhaps too sedulously

wrapped by the devout—they in no wise diminish one's sense of his genius. For that stands out from them—genius at large, so to speak, and only by accident finding its outlet in a particular channel. What, one wonders, would he have become had the War not happened to him to bring him fame and, in the sequel, to warp though not to spoil his nature? Reading what he wrote when he was an eager and brilliant youth, exploring French castles or digging for dead civilisations at Carchemish, one feels that he might have been a great historian, one of the great imaginative reconstructors of the past. His sense of it was extraordinarily vivid, and at twenty he had already an amazing store of knowledge, that sure incisive judgment which was afterwards to stand him in such stead, and a vigorous, supple, evocative pen. He had the makings of a poet; and perhaps, like BYRON, he would, after all, have found some more perilous cause than literature in which to fight. These are futile speculations; but they may be taken as a tribute to the stimulating quality of the book which Mr. DAVID GARNETT has so excellently constructed.

England Speaking

A school once existed that taught its dates backwards on the ground that it was easier for the young mind to assimilate "Penny Postage in the British Dominions, 1840" than woad and coracles. On much the same assumption Professor WALLACE NOTESTEIN of Yale University opens his delightful series of thirteen English portraits with FREDERICK BETTESWORTH the Victorian labourer and ends up with a family group of the Tudor BERKELEYS—thereby, alas! giving a miss to the racier England of our mediaeval ancestors. His bag includes LUCY LYTTLETON, COKE of Norfolk, PARSON WOODFORDE and such shyer birds as THOMAS TYLDESLEY, Papist and Jacobite, and BRILLIANA, Lady HARLEY, of Civil War fame. These have been selected for the most part as leading retired or rural lives (or both), conditions which favour what an excellent Preface calls "characteristic social situations." There is little comment though much tact and grace of presentation in these Lives; but the Preface resumes the critical attitude of a notable lover of our byways, actual and literary. The author contrasts his *English Folk* (CAPE, 12/6) with their present-day successors and regrets the standardisation, which he puts down to democracy; but surely for "democracy" he should have read "industrialism"?



"HE'S SOMETHING IN THE CITY."



NO CONSEQUENCE

"I SAY, JACK! WHO'S THAT COME TO GRIEF IN THE DITCH?"

"ONLY THE PARSON!"

"OH, LEAVE HIM THERE, THEN! HE WON'T BE WANTED UNTIL NEXT SUNDAY!"

John Leech, December 8th, 1855.

From Bad to Worse

The world's sympathy is of course entirely with the Chinese in the present life-and-death conflict, and one perpetually seeks amid the daily horrifying news from the East some improvement of their condition and prospects. Looking at the map and regarding the affair on the physical plane one sees only a ravaged China and a continuing destruction of her resources. But some people, and among them Lady HOSIE in her latest work, *Brave New China* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 12/6), find consolation in the sustained moral of the Chinese people and the hard-set determination of their leader. The author describes a journey she has recently made through the country and notes what she has observed. She is inclined to over-estimate the actual as against the potential power of Chinese Christianity, and now and again leans to a super-

benevolent sentimentality. But her affection for China is genuine and comprehensive. One is moved to pity by many of her recitals. It is not her fault that the public can scarcely share her final optimism.

Belloc and the Baltic

There is still, thank Heaven, in Mr. BELLOC's praise of small towns something of the stability and contentment—if not perhaps the visible modesty—of the towns themselves. Even his prejudices are articles of faith, a condition of things comforting to the reader who happens to share them if infuriating to other schools of perversity. *Return to the Baltic* (CONSTABLE, 12/6) exhibits all the old charm and not too much of the old petulance. In a journey undertaken after forty-three years' absence the author visits Denmark the egalitarian and Sweden the aristocratic, Poland, and

the Danzig that he says should have been Polish—always with Captain EDMOND WARRE at his elbow to reinforce his pen with a gracefully commemorative pencil. His book shows you Danish origins at Jelling and Swedish at Upsala, battlefields, whirlpools and the turrets of Elsinore, COPERNICUS's statue and the sarcophagus of SWEDENBORG, with sound dissertations on a world that is fast forgetting how to crown a well-chosen site with beautiful buildings or to perfect a human soul in the Christian tradition. Very few books of travel could do so much—and so well—in so small a compass.

Oriental Art

Londoners are lazy people: rather than take the trouble to see China for themselves they induce Mr. CHIANG YEE to present familiar metropolitan scenes in an Eastern manner. In *The Silent Traveler in London* (COUNTRY LIFE, 10/6) appear thirteen plates, satisfyingly decorative and superlatively charming. Kew Gardens are stylised to resemble Soochow, and Richmond Park moulded to the likeness of the Chinking forest. Variety is imparted by the inclusion of "Umbrellas Under Big Ben" and "London Faces in a Public Bar"—essays in the Japanese and Hogarthian manners. But the artist's trees constitute his greatest success because, one may hazard, they are his greatest delight. The text hardly reaches the level of the plates. It contains a number of not very profound reflections on various aspects of English life. Perhaps Mr. CHIANG has lived too long among us and has lost amid London fogs the pellucid freshness which distinguished YOSHIO MARKINO, his predecessor in this line of interpretation. The book is handsomely presented by the publishers.

All for the Love of a Lady

It is perhaps rather a pity that the publishers (HEINE-MANN) of Miss E. BAKER QUINN's second detective novel, *The Dead Harm No One* (7/6), have stated that every word of its dialogue "crackles with nervous vitality." For in these restless days such an announcement may not create an entirely favourable impression. But, however that may be, it will certainly be a pity if readers of lurid fiction who are looking for something different from their every-day provender should miss this successor to *One Man's Muddle*. *James Strange* is again to the fore both as teller of the story and as a man who during two spells of prison life had not

lost his queer sense of chivalry. Miss QUINN discredits him with a capacity for swallowing alcohol that is almost incredible, but in all other respects she has shown praise-worthy restraint. And in a book-world that is already overcrowded with private investigators, professional detectives and so forth, comfortable room must in justice be found for her rumblingly human *Batterson*.

Novelists, Beware!

End of an Author (COLLINS, 7/6) contains a warning which those of us who consider fiction to be an important part of literature will find little difficulty in appreciating and applauding. For Mr. J. JEFFERSON FARJEON has taken as one of his leading characters an author, *Peter Hanby*, who had already written forty-nine novels and was so overcome by the task of concocting his fiftieth that his brain gave way under the strain. The majority of those connected in one way or another with *Peter* were eccentric folk, but Mr. FARJEON succeeds in making all of them contribute to a story which, although not one of his happiest efforts, is cleverly staged and vividly written.

An Ideal Companion

The irritated critic who declared recently that biographers had forsaken truth for half-truth could not have been thinking of Mr. GEORGE SEAVER, for against his books about EDWARD WILSON and now against "*Birdie*" BOWERS of the Antarctic (MURRAY, 10/6) no accusation of straying by one word from the truth could conceivably be brought. Happy in being able for the most part to let BOWERS, from letters, tell his own story, happy too in an excellent introduction by Mr. APSLEY CHERRY-GARRARD, Mr. SEAVER has succeeded in putting a clear and memorable portrait before us. And it must indeed have been difficult to write of BOWERS in measured terms when his splendid services during SCOTT's last journey were appraised. But his record on that never-to-be-forgotten march was only the climax to a life that had always been finely and truly lived, and in this volume can be found a tale of steadfastness, cheerfulness and modesty as inspiring as any that has ever been told.

"DALADIER BREAKS THE FRENCH STRIKE."

News Poster.

Jouhaux, Jouhaux, it's back to work we go.



"MANY HAPPY RETURNS, CATHCART. I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT TO GET YOU."

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Charivaria

It is said that many interesting facts about hibernation are discovered every winter at the Zoo. And the finders of course are keepers.

★ ★ ★

"THE MAN WITH THE X-RAY EYES
AND ALL-STAR CAST."

From Variety Programme.

In one or both?

★ ★ ★

Commenting on his recent magnificent gift of "iron lungs" to hospitals, Lord NUFFIELD stated: "The credit must go to BOTH." We respectfully differ—the credit must go to both.

★ ★ ★

People with long outstanding thumbs have artistic temperaments, we read. They should also be very showy exponents of the Lambeth Walk.



★ ★ ★

"There is nothing tempting about British trains," said an American expert after a visit here. He must have overlooked the communication-cord.

★ ★ ★

There is as yet no confirmation of the report that a Nazi official has been imprisoned for arriving fifteen

minutes late at a spontaneous anti-Semitic demonstration.

★ ★ ★

"In these notes last week it was remarked that a sum estimated in mining circles at £8,000,000 had been required this year to finance developments on the Rand, and to some extent therefore that the resources of the principal mining houses may have been tied up in nursing propositions."—*Investors' Chronicle*.

It is of course the privilege of the shareholders to hold the baby.



We read that there is more brandy in this country at the present time than there has been for many years. So much for the persistent rumour that the spirit of Christmas is abroad.

★ ★ ★

An Impending Apology

"SIR ARNOLD WILSON AT LARGE
BUNTINGFORD MEETING."

Provincial Paper.

★ ★ ★

It is announced that television in the Midlands is not yet practicable. And so for the time being Manchester will see to-morrow what London sees to-day.

★ ★ ★

"Vacuum cleaner salesmen could tell some queer tales if they cared," said a writer to a paper. Unfortunately most of them *do* care.

★ ★ ★

An American woman who was recently awarded ten thousand pounds damages against a man after a car accident, was afterwards married to him. It seems that he married her for his money.

★ ★ ★

"Why spend good money on laundering bills?" asks an advertisement. We don't; we burn them.

★ ★ ★

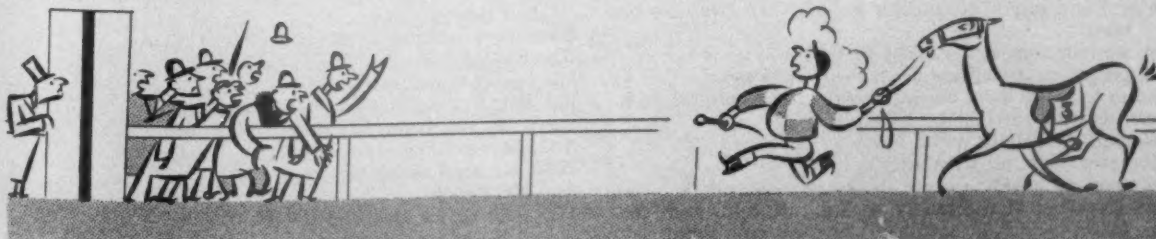
Nature Note

"When not in use, the bat hangs upside down."

Schoolboy's Essay.

★ ★ ★

A sports-writer complains that the majority of our race-meetings are overcrowded. Even the horses we back seem to have difficulty in getting a place.





"I RECOLLECT—IT WAS THE YEAR WOMEN WORE THOSE FUNNY HATS."

Taking Cover

"My dear," said Miss Prinn,
 "How very nice of you to drop in!
 You'll have some tea, won't you? Well now,
 I must tell you about our dreadful gas-drill row.
 You see, to be perfectly just and fair,
 I must admit that during that ghastly September scare
 Our village, though alert and steady,
 Was not READY.
 And there was Major Blare
 Frightening the people by striding about and shouting
 'Prepare!'
 And greeting the dear Vicar with a frown
 Because in order to encourage the villagers he wore his
 gas-mask upside-down—
 By mistake of course. Well now,
 We come to the Row.
 When dear Mr. Chamberlain had set our minds at rest
 Major Blare said that, though we must all hope for the
 best,
 Yet we (our sort, dear) ought to lead
 The people of the village in efficiency and speed.
 And so ten of us went one afternoon to his house for drill.
 I can see that terrible scene still;
 I thought the Major would burst.
 Mind you, dear, all went well at first.
 He stood on a very rickety drawing-room chair,
 And I noticed at the time that this rather worried Mrs.
 Blare.

He instructed us in the points of Respirator Parade.
 Perhaps he was just a shade
 Too military, if you know what I mean;
 It quite upset Mr. Green.
 Major Blare told us we must all be calm,
 And when he blew his whistle it meant 'Air Raid' and
 'Gas Alarm,'
 And then, instead of a stampede,
 We must put on our gas-masks with tremendous speed;
 After which, still calm and unafraid,
 We must take temporary cover from the Raid.
 That sounded quite all right. But, dear, the MESS!
 My dear, I honestly confess
 A real raid could not have been more alarming.
 The dear Vicar was quite too charming
 When we banged our heads together behind a chair;
 His mask was on upside-down again, but of course no one
 had time to care.
 There were terrible shrieks from Mr. Green
 Who had got himself squashed between
 The bookcase and the wall.
 But Mrs. Tomms couldn't speak at all;
 She is, as you know, my dear, rather fat,
 And she was lying absolutely flat
 With her head under the couch;
 And Mr. Pouch
 Was rubbing his knee and shin
 Which he had banged on a cupboard-door as he tried to get in.

Mrs. Pouch, who had listened to everything the Major said
About keeping calm, put a tea-cosy on her head
And stood absolutely still.

Young Mrs. Hill,

Who, as you know, dear, always has presence of mind,
Pulled back the china-cabinet and wedged herself behind;

This was perhaps a little rash,
Judging by the subsequent clatter and clash.

But poor old Mr. and Mrs. Stride
Could not find anywhere at all to hide;

They ran hither and thither in what you, dear, would call
a stew,

And they did look rather peculiar, because their gas-masks
were all askew.

The Vicar's wife

Was having the struggle of her life
To conceal herself behind a curtain.

I am quite certain

That Major Blare

Did not really intend to swear;

But, my dear, I am sure that he swore,

For he used strange words that I had never heard before.
And above all the clamour and the rout

Were those odd sounds that people make when breathing
out.

I will not harrow you, dear, with further details of that day;
I hardly know myself how we got away.

And really none of us has recovered yet,

And I doubt whether Major Blare will ever forget

Or forgive the dear Vicar for the unfortunate text

He used when preaching next.

It was 'He hath put down the mighty from their seat.'

The Major said afterwards—well now, dear, it isn't fit to
repeat.

I am quite, quite sure that the dear Vicar, who is the best of
men,

Never meant anything personal. But then

I've forgotten to tell you that on that dreadful day
When we were all sheltering and trying to get away,
Poor Major Blare

Fell backwards heavily from off his drawing-room chair.

He was incapacitated rather uncomfortably, as I know for
a fact;

So perhaps our dear Vicar was just a little lacking in tact."

The Unscrupulous Merchant and the Two Persons

AN Unscrupulous Merchant was anxious to clear out a section of his stock, and in consequence threw open his establishment to job buyers of every description, however disreputable. He was not in the least surprised therefore to receive a visit from Two Persons of an extremely unorthodox and careless appearance, with tousled hair and strangely ill-assorted garments, who had apparently left their barrow outside. The Unscrupulous Merchant pounced hungrily upon them and took them to some imported goods which he described as a special snip. Having shrewdly summed up his visitors, he told them in strict confidence something which he felt sure would make them chuckle and at the same time clinch the deal. He was, he said, only able to arrive at this absolutely knock-out price because he had originally smuggled the goods in at a fraction of the proper duty, an advantage which naturally had an important bearing on the remarkably low price now quoted. The Two Persons, whose interest had greatly increased during the course of these remarks, thereupon suggested to the Unscrupulous Merchant that he might be under some misapprehension as to their identity and, producing a card, informed him that they were Customs Inquiry Officers and would like to see his books.

Moral: CONFIDENCES ARE SOMETIMES MISPLACED.



Coffee in Egypt

IF in England everything stops for tea, in Egypt every conversation starts with coffee. In the ordinary way I am not much incommoded with conversation. I sit in dignified seclusion in my private office and leave the coffee-drinking to my Monsieur Joseph. But on rare occasions it is my duty to leave my safe and comfortable desk and go into the villages of Egypt to establish personal contact with the firm's customers.

To give due emphasis to the solemnity of the occasion the advent of the manager is heralded by a flight of postcards addressed to the customers who are to be honoured, and at five o'clock on the morning of the appointed day I go sadly to Cairo station in order to reach Mansourah in time for the opening of the market. In the train I look through the list of the thirty customers who are to be visited and rehearse the Arabic phrases which express solicitude about health, wonder at the size and magnificence of premises, and gratitude for being received by distinguished men.

At Mansourah I meet Monsieur Samaan, the firm's traveller. Monsieur Samaan and I are both feeling hungry and we pause in the station to drink coffee. We also eat unleavened bread with cheese and, by way of raising ourselves to terms of conversational equality with our customers, consume several raw onions. This is not the kind of breakfast to which I am accustomed and, against my better judgment, I console myself with some more coffee. Monsieur Samaan and I then proceed

to the premises of the first customer on my list, a certain Mohammed. I exchange compliments with Mohammed and, before proceeding to business, accept from him a cup of coffee. We then visit the establishments of Ahmed, Sabet, Mahmoud, Khalil and Abdel Rehim, and, with diminishing alacrity, I accept a cup of coffee from each of them. By the time I am welcomed by Abu Tisht my appetite for coffee is exhausted and I decline the proffered refreshment. It happens, however, that this Abu Tisht is a poor man and the least esteemed of the firm's customers in Mansourah, and he takes my refusal as implying a reflection on his social standing.

"It is known to me," he says in offended tones to Monsieur Samaan, "that the manager has taken coffee with all the customers, omitting none, and if he now rejects my hospitality it is because I am poor and he wishes to shame me before the town."

Monsieur Samaan naturally sets to work at once to refute this most unjust conclusion. He says eloquently that Abu Tisht, if not the richest, is the most honourable of men, that his name is frequently cited with admiration by the Directors in England as a model to all the firm's customers, and that if the manager seemed to refuse coffee it was owing to a misunderstanding. I immediately confirm that nothing could have been further from my thoughts than to refuse coffee, and to remove the last doubts from Abu Tisht's sensitive mind I am obliged to accept a second cup.

We then leave Abu Tisht's premises, and I say to Monsieur Samaan that my endurance is now finally at an end, that I have drunk ten cups of coffee and

that not even the greatest stickler for etiquette could ask me to drink any more. But Monsieur Samaan takes an opposite view. He says that as it will now be generally known in the town that I have coffee with the least worthy of our customers it will be doubly an insult to refuse the hospitality of any of the others. He claims urgently that the whole future of the firm depends on my fortitude in this matter and eventually compels me to agree.

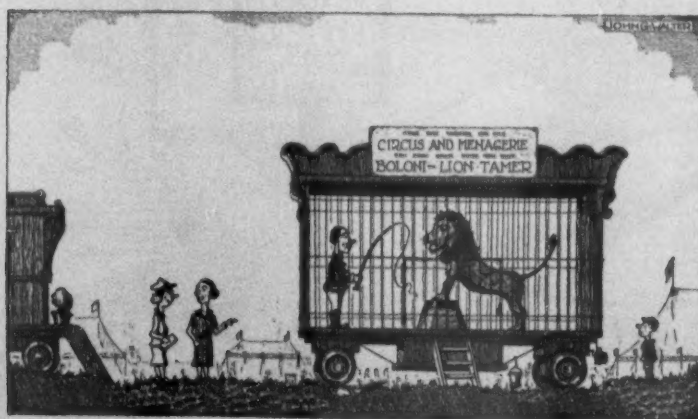
The day passes. Morning turns to afternoon, afternoon gives way to evening and my attitude towards coffee changes from distaste to revulsion and from revulsion to the keenest abhorrence, until, as we approach our twenty-fifth customer, I regard it with such utter loathing that I am ready to sacrifice the firm, my career, even my wife and children rather than drink any more. So when the customer, whose name is Korayem, courteously offers me my twenty-ninth cup I courteously refuse. But Korayem is a customer of the highest standing with the firm and it is inconceivable to him that I should reject his coffee. He thinks that I am joking, he presses me further, and when I continue to refuse he indulgently assumes that I am exhibiting a genteel reluctance—that I am emphasising my high position by the display of a fascinating and gentlemanly coyness. We argue on these lines for a long time and at last I grow desperate. I tell him the truth and throw myself on his mercy.

"Listen!" I say, "I am ill. I am near death. I cannot drink coffee. One more cup would be the end of me."

Korayem is much concerned. He is a kindly man and he does not wish to kill the manager. But he is also resourceful and he is determined not to fall short in hospitality. After a little thought he says he will give me something harmless and even beneficial, and before I can protest he has provided me with a large glass of buffalo's milk. I turn pale. Beads of cold sweat start out on my brow. But it is impossible to spurn a refreshment so kindly intended. I drink the buffalo's milk, and with the remaining five customers I submit to coffee as a man who had known scorpions would submit to whips.

But at last the day's business is done. I stagger to the train. Borne down, overwhelmed and utterly oppressed and dejected by my thirty-four cups of coffee, I return to Cairo. At the door of my house my wife meets me. She looks at me with concern and solicitude.

"My dear," she says, "how tired you look! But we'll soon put that right, I'll just go and make you a strong cup of coffee."

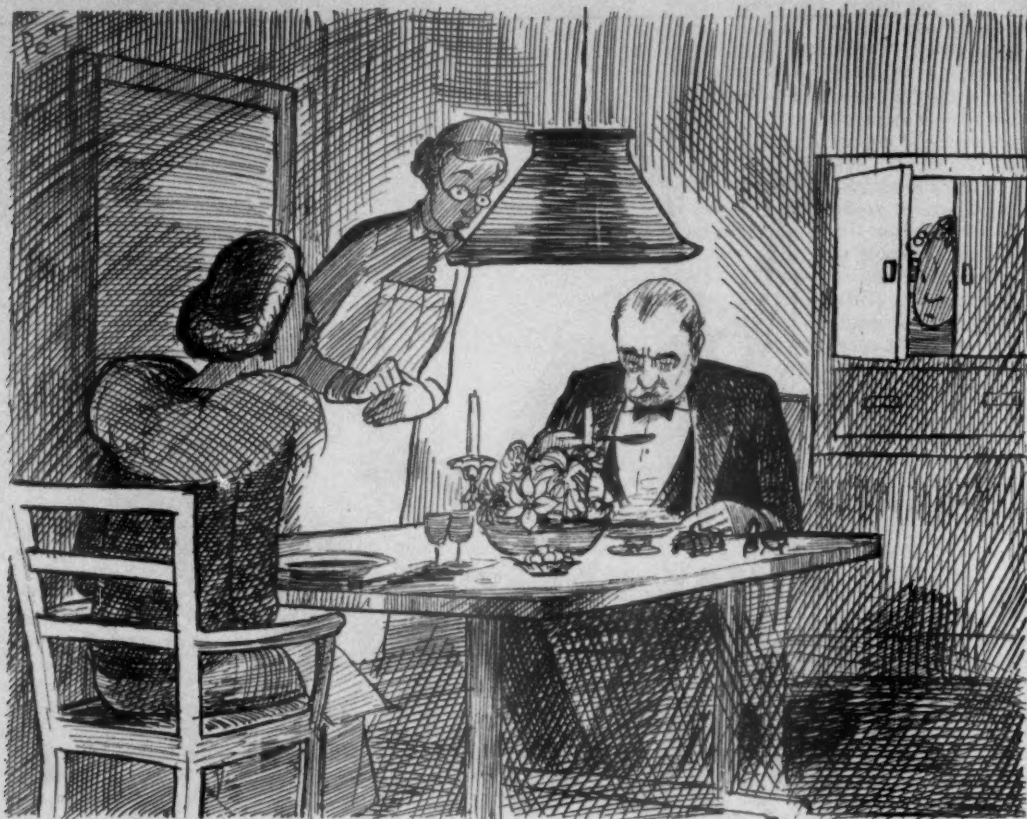


"AND THIS IS MY HUSBAND'S LITTLE DEN."



REGISTRATION DAY

(Mr. Punch attempts to endorse and elaborate the idea expressed in the House of Commons last week that the introduction of Sir John Anderson's National Register should be made an occasion for civic pageantry.)



AT HOME
THE EPICURE

Entertainments Committee

THE Caraways had been in session for nearly two hours. They were now in the state of frayed nerves which afflicts members of a jury after being shut up for a whole day to consider their verdict.

"Well," sighed Mrs. Caraway, "now that we've at last decided whom to ask, there only remains the question of how we're going to amuse them all when they get here." She spoke as if it were a detail to be settled in a few minutes; but that didn't deceive anyone.

"a," said Christopher, "we haven't decided—at least we've all decided differently; and b if you'd only ask the sort of people I suggested you wouldn't have to bother about amusing them. They'd amuse you."

Mr. Caraway made an indignant blowing sound into his Sunday paper.

"Father says 'Pshaw!'" said Stephen, "meaning that he finds our friends not only not amusing but bestial and revolting."

"So do I sometimes, as a matter of fact," said Christopher reflectively. "But at least they aren't dull. They aren't heavy and patronising like—"

"That's all settled, Christopher," said Mrs. Caraway. "You're asking some of your friends and we're asking some of ours. It doesn't help to be rude about them. And do use the ash-tray."

"Why?" said Christopher argumentatively. "If I do it'll only get knocked over as soon as it's full. My way, the ash gets spread evenly so's you don't notice it. Besides, it's g—"

"It is not!" said Mr. Caraway.

"I wasn't going to say that, Father. I was going to say it's got nothing to do with the party question. Don't let's get off the point again. Now then, Mother, what sort of organised hearti-

ness do you want to spring on them this time?"

"We must have something noisy to start off with. What's a good ice-breaker?"

"Get 'em all coked up with alc.," suggested Stephen, who was lying on his back on the sofa, throwing an old tennis-ball at the ceiling.

"Don't be horrible," said his mother. "What about that game with a balloon—you know, where you have two teams and they try to hit it—?"

"You did say ice, didn't you?" said Christopher. "Because if someone like Johnny Finch starts hitting at anything he takes to be a balloon, well—"

"You agreed to cross Finch off your list," said Mr. Caraway coldly.

"Oh, yes, so I did. That was in exchange for Aunt Bella, wasn't it? Don't call him Finch, Father; it's so unfriendly. No, I don't think balloons, Mother."

"Well, we'll leave that for the

present. Then I thought we might have something quiet round the fire."

"My God!" said Christopher.

"I suppose," said Stephen, "you mean one of those games where two lucky devils go out of the room, and if they come back they have to ask everybody a lot of fatuous questions. You know, this isn't a children's party, Mother. William's had his already."

"And from what I saw of it," said Christopher, "it was far more of a success than ours will be. No one took the slightest notice of anyone else, except for a few fights here and there, and they all seemed to be perfectly happy."

"What's the moral of that?" said Mr. Caraway. "Give each guest a clockwork toy, or what?"

"No, don't organise them, that's all."

"You've got to have something planned," said Mrs. Caraway.

"All right, then, but don't plan it as if you were a hospital matron bullying a lot of cross old pensioners into a state of gratitude."

"What Mother means," said Stephen with the generous air of one who can see both sides, "is that there's a crisis in every party which you've got to get over somehow."

"You mean in a sherry party when you see people holding bottles up to the light and frowning," said Christopher. "Produce more bottles and it's all right."

"Yes, but with an evening party it's harder."

"That's why you've got to have things for them to do," said Mrs. Caraway.

"All right, but not these vile general knowledge games, Mother. It isn't hospitable to gloat over people's ignorance."

"Well, you suggest something, then. What do people play nowadays? What did you do at the Fletchers, for instance?"

Christopher thought for a moment. "I remember singing—" he said slowly.

His father snorted. "If that's all you remember—"

"—and wearing a fireman's helmet. Yes, that was it. And it was a cracking good party, so that proves what I said. It wasn't organised, and it was a success."

"A success as what?" said Mr. Caraway sceptically.

"Well, we enjoyed it, that's all. Anything wrong in that?"

"But we can't give that sort of party," said Mrs. Caraway. "Can you imagine Mrs. Rossiter in a fire—"

"Objection!" said Christopher tri-

umphantly. He referred to a piece of paper on the table. "Mrs. Rossiter was struck off very early on condition that I didn't ask more than three of the Fletchers."

"And we're still willing, Father," said Stephen, "to trade two more Fletchers for old Pop Rossiter. No good?"

Mr. Caraway shook his head.

"Three, then," said Christopher. "No Fletchers at all, Father. Think of that. Just for striking off that old wheezing bore."

"I tell you Stanley Rossiter is—"

"Hey, damn it!" said Stephen, sitting up suddenly. "Can't you do something about this ceiling? I just got a great bit of plaster in the eye."

"Look at those marks up there!" said Mrs. Caraway. "Really, Stephen, if you throw any more tennis-balls at that ceiling—"

"I'm not throwing the ball at it, Mother. I'm seeing how near I can get without hitting it."

"I think perhaps we'd better have a children's party after all," said Mr. Caraway.

"What about playing a nice old favourite like clumps?" said Mrs. Caraway unconconvincingly.

No one troubled to ridicule that.

"Or there's always charades," she added.

"Nearly always," said Christopher.

"Oh, well, I give up. Father and I will have our people in the dining-

room and you can have the rest of the house."

"Do you mean to say we can't come into the dining-room?" said Christopher. "The floor's best for dancing there."

"Besides, you can't keep people out of a dining-room," said Stephen.

"Look here," said Mr. Caraway with finality, "either you agree to that or we mix all the guests up together and play dumb crambo, guessing games, and anything else I can think of, and in that case there'll be nothing but lemonade and jelly for everyone."

"The dining-room is yours," said Christopher. "Provided," he added, "that we can have the sideboard pushed out into the hall."

Mr. Caraway didn't object.

"Well, then," Christopher went on, "now that we've agreed to have two separate parties, there can't be any harm in our having whoever we like, can there? Johnny Finch, for instance, and all six Fletchers, and—"

"If Finch as much as comes near this house—" Mr. Caraway began.

"But, Father, he's all right when you get to know him."

Half-an-hour later the Caraways had definitely decided whom to ask; and then, as Mrs. Caraway seemed to remember having said before, there only remained the question of how they were going to amuse them all when they got there.



"MOTHER, DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME YOU PUT YOUR HAIR UP?"

Assistant Masters: Are They Insane?

A third series of extracts from the private papers of Arthur James Wentworth, assistant master at Burgrove Preparatory School.

Wednesday. This morning IIIA were unusually quiet when I went in and I at once glanced at the front legs of my desk. Once or twice since I first came to Burgrove I have hurt myself rather badly through my desk falling off its dais the moment I have leant my elbows on it. I shall always believe, though I have never been able to prove it, that this must have been the work of the boys. Old Poole, who left us last year after twenty-seven years' faithful service in charge of French and Geography, had the same experience, and he was positive that the front legs had been balanced deliberately on the very edge of the dais. Though, as he used to say, it might be simply carelessness on the part of the cleaner. It is always difficult to bring this kind of thing home to the boys.

However, the desk looked all right to-day; but I was still uneasy. Every schoolmaster knows how unnerving it is when the boys sit quietly in their places and watch you in that silly expressionless way they have, and I do not mind admitting that I stood quite still in the middle of the floor for a full minute waiting for something to happen. Nothing happened at all except that I distinctly heard Mason whispering, "Rigor mortis has set in."

I at once strode to the desk to get my punishment-book, but when I opened the lid a pigeon flew out, nearly knocking my spectacles off and giving me, naturally enough, a very nasty shock. In my seven years at Burgrove I have never had such a thing happen to me. I went white with anger.

"Stop that noise this instant!" I shouted. "And you, Mason, leave that bird alone and go back to your desk. Now, which of you is responsible for this? Hurry up, I'm waiting."

There was absolute silence for some seconds, until the pigeon, which had settled on top of the blackboard, began to coo in an annoying way, and I then brought my fist down with a crash on the desk.

"We had better understand one another," I said with cold fury. "Somebody put that pigeon in my desk and I am going to find out who did it. Unless the person responsible owns up within three minutes— Ah, Mason, so it was you?"

"Me, Sir? No, Sir. Only I think——"

"Well?"

"I think it's got something tied to its leg."

Someone suggested it might be a message.

"It's a stool-pigeon!" cried Clarke.

"I bet it's spies."

"Atkins saw a man just like Hitler behind the pavvy——"

"Be quiet!" I shouted.

While I was considering what to do, Mason, who seems utterly unable to hold his tongue for two seconds, asked whether he might find out what the message said. I asked him rather sarcastically how he proposed to catch the pigeon, and before I could object he went to the blackboard and held out his right index finger, which the bird at once settled upon. I gave Hillman fifty lines for clapping, as a warning to the others, and then suggested to Mason that he seemed to know the pigeon remarkably well. He replied that he knew all the school pigeons well and he thought this must be one of them. I had already guessed this, but said nothing.

"Shall I read the message, Sir?" he asked, untying it from the bird's leg.

"Very well," I said, after a moment's hesitation. "What does it say?"

"It says 'Fly at once. All is discovered.'"

In the ordinary way I might have joined in the general laughter, but this morning I felt too upset and angry.

"Give me that paper, Mason," I said, "and sit down. No—let that bird out of the window first. I want every boy—give out some slips, Etheridge, please, there is no need to waste a whole sheet—I want every boy to copy out what is written here and sign his name beneath it. And no talking."

"Need I do it, Sir?"

"Certainly you must do it, Saponulos. And stop that silly whimpering this instant."

The boys then began clamouring that they had forgotten the message, and to save further trouble I wrote it up on the board. My plan was of course to compare the handwriting on the slips with that on the original paper; in this way I felt certain of being able to spot the culprit, though as a matter of fact when I looked through the slips this evening I found that the boys had misunderstood my intention and written the words in capitals, which made the test practically useless. Etheridge collected the slips without incident and I then told the whole set to get on with the solving of brackets in Exercise 37. I felt too weary and disheartened to do any actual teaching.

Unless someone has owned up by to-morrow morning I shall have to take severe measures. But it is difficult to know what to do.

Thursday. There was an unfortunate sequel to the pigeon affair this morning. After prayers in Big School the Headmaster said he had something serious to say. It appears that when he entered Classroom 4 for the second period yesterday morning he found what he described as an impertinent remark scrawled up on the board. He did not propose to repeat the remark, as the boy responsible would know very well what he meant. Let that boy stand up at once and confess. I had no option but to come forward from my place with the other masters and explain that I had myself written the sentence and that I regretted the board had not been cleaned at the end of the period by the bottom boy of the set, whose duty it was. I added, for I did not wish to get Saponulos into trouble, that the boy concerned had not yet perhaps had time to get used to our English ways and customs.

This ended the matter for the time being, but it has put me into something of a dilemma. The Headmaster, who is if anything a shade too inquisitive, will no doubt require a fuller explanation, and though I have managed to avoid him for the whole of to-day, I cannot hope to do so indefinitely. The difficulty is that I do not wish to tell him about the pigeon in my desk; it would only worry him and could do no good. He is still rather upset, to tell the truth, about my accident in the boot-room. So I shall have to think of some other reason for writing that absurd message on the board. It would be better of course if I could link it up in some way with algebra. But I don't at the moment see my way.

In the meantime I have told IIIA that I have decided to say no more about the pigeon provided nothing of the sort happens again, and I have warned them that the less they say about it to anyone the better it will be for them.

H. F. E.

My Dear Holmes!

"You would have to look very carefully at his steady blue eyes, set rather widely apart, to appreciate the fact that he was our leading air ace during the war."—*Daily Mail.*

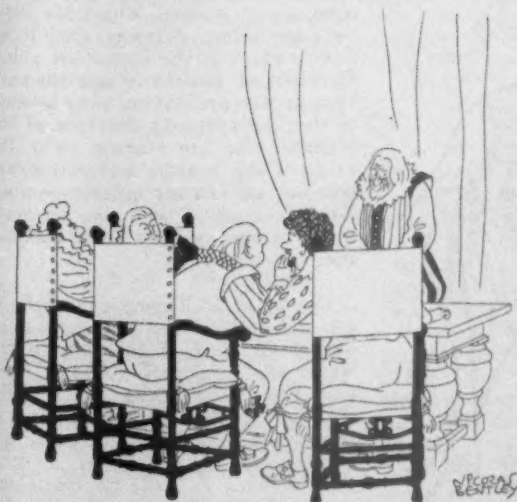
More Clerihews



When Alexander Pope
Accidentally trod on the soap
And came down on the back of his head—
Never mind what he said.



"How many times," mused Hugo,
"Do fours into 372 go?
Come, now; let me see.
I have it—*Ninety-three!*"



When their lordships asked Bacon
How many bribes he had taken
He had at least the grace
To get very red in the face.



I fear that King Canute
Was rather a secretive sort of brute.
He would never admit it, but
His name was really Knut. E. C. B.

At the Pictures

A HEAVYWEIGHT AND SOME LIGHT-WEIGHTS

PERHAPS the simoom—I hope I'm right in calling it a simoom, and at least I think I'm rightier than the people who called it a simoon—was put into *Suez* as the result of an uneasy feeling that the picture needed brightening up. Its menacing, sky-filling approach and the staggering destruction it causes are done very well. But unfortunately this freak of nature in the desert comes near the end of the film, is not as dramatically led up to as even the hurricane in *Hurricane*, and has really no place, certainly not nearly so prominent a place, in the story of the making of the Suez Canal. The film is full of historical inaccuracies, as you might expect, but it is also dull, and that I do protest against. With almost unlimited chances to mix up historical events (after all, look what they have mixed up), they go and make the result uninteresting.

The trouble, or one trouble, with these pseudo-historical films is that their dialogue is uneasily balanced between pompous melodrama and anachronistic facetiousness, and any actor who tries to make anything of his part must have a dreadful time. I am thinking particularly of TYRONE POWER, who in *Suez* is called *Ferdinand de Lesseps*, and LORETTA YOUNG, who is called *Eugénie*; not of, for instance, MILES MANDER, who has opportunities in the small part of *Disraeli* and makes the most of them.

The convention that decorative young stars must always be ordinary heroes and heroines, a historical setting simply providing them with names, is perhaps responsible for most of the faults of *Suez*. Not so badly off, though, is ANNABELLA as *Toni*, a kind of child of the desert; since in the first part of the film she is not supposed to have learnt to read, she has no excuse for talking like a book.

The whole show is in sepia—if that makes any difference.

Free to Live is one of those stories in which people are called upon to be gay and keep a stiff upper lip while their hearts break in the most expensive surroundings—the sort of story JOAN CRAWFORD usually gets (e.g. *The Shining Hour*). The actress concerned this time however is KATHARINE HEPBURN, who seems to me to have a similar range of powers, though she draws her sounds more. (I should

like to listen to an i-drawing contest between Miss HEPBURN, JOAN BENNETT and IDA LUPINO.) *Free to Live* is raised out of the run of "society" comedies, in my opinion, by the performance of CARY GRANT, the fact that EDWARD EVERETT HORTON has a



IN DOWD

Perplexed Fan. "These films do make me realise how I'm forgetting my history."

Eugénie LORETTA YOUNG
Ferdinand de Lesseps TYRONE POWER

part in which he is allowed to show some sense, and the appearance of LEW AYRES as a disappointed young man who drinks too much.

Miss HEPBURN as usual has to represent Eager Youth with its Burning



REBELS IN MUFTI

Johnny Case . . . CARY GRANT
Linda Seton . . . KATHARINE HEPBURN

Hatred of Shams, and all that stuff. She also has to deliver quite a few rather sentimental speeches showing that she can be as whimsy as the next. In this instance the next is Mr. GRANT, who wants at first to marry *Julia* (DORIS NOLAN), until she turns out to be unable to grasp the importance of wanting to live one's own life away from all the stuffed shirts. In the end he gets *Linda* (Miss HEPBURN), surprising most people on the screen but nobody at all off it.

This is all very nicely and amusingly done—the dazzling competence of Mr. GRANT is always a pleasure to watch, and here he throws in two or three somersaults and handspings as well—and makes an entertaining picture, of no importance whatever.

Putting the MARX BROTHERS into *Room Service*, I thought beforehand, was rather like choosing a man with a particularly funny face to read WODEHOUSE aloud: it showed, I thought, an almost British indifference to the dangers of blending two different types of humour. However, the result proves to be all right, unless you are a MARX purist or a *Room Service* purist (and there can't be many of the latter here, for the play didn't do well in London). GROUCHO has almost a sensible part, CHICO and HARPO are much as usual (except that there are no interludes on the piano and the harp) and not so much out of place as they might be in this farcical but not impossible story of the theatrical manager who manages to live with twenty-two members of his company at a hotel where he never pays any bills. Anyway, they're all funny, which is the important point. Devotees of healthy straightforward humour who are staying away because of the MARXES, and devotees of the MARXES who are staying away because of the healthy straightforward humour, are—in my opinion—wrong. Even devotees of both who are staying away because they dislike compromises are wrong.

Thanks for the Memory seems to be an attempt to dramatise or make a story out of the song of the same name, which the principals, SHIRLEY ROSS and BOB HOPE, sang in *The Big Broadcast* of 1938. It's just another of those we-said-good-bye-with-a-highball stories, but mitigated by a great deal of fun. . . . *The Shining Hour*, once a KEITH WINTER play, has become, as I hinted above, a typical JOAN CRAWFORD "vehicle." This is mitigated by a beautiful performance from MARGARET SULLAVAN and some good lines. R. M.

Navigational Bridge

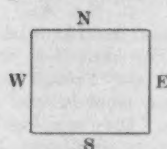
I WAS pleased once again to hear from my correspondent at the Hawthorns Club, for he usually has some interesting bridge problem to bring to my notice.

On this occasion it was a neat little point on orientation in relationship to bridge players literally and figuratively at sea.

He has, it seems, spent the last year in touring the world, and whilst returning from Bermuda to New York the following rather curious incident occurred at the card-table.

When the game began he was sitting in the position he designates as south. Thus:—

● New York.

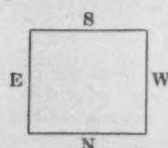


— Bermudas.

He called Six Spades and was promptly doubled. Just about this time, apparently, the wireless operator received a cable saying: "Hurricane each way this afternoon. Act at once."

The operator brought the cable to the captain, and as both of them are hardworking men not addicted to horse-racing, the Captain decided to turn his ship round to avoid the storm. This of course made the position of three of the bridge players as follows:

● New York.



— Bermudas.

It also changed the position of dummy, who was leaning against the bar in disgust at the idiocy of his partner's call. The turn of the ship made him lurch, and he alone of the players noticed the volte-face of the skipper that had disturbed his balance. Recovering, he at once made for the card-table and claimed he was now South and was therefore entitled to play the hand. He also insisted that East was now West, and vice-versa, so he maintained they must change places too.



"Ah! THOSE WERE THE DAYS!"

High words ensued, and East or West, my correspondent is uncertain which, threatened to go on the bridge and box the compass, but even his partner considered this futile, so he waived the idea.

At this moment the Captain was apparently advised of the real meaning of the cable, because he avoided any further unpleasantness by turning the ship round once more, although there was one nasty second when East was North and West was South, and it looked as if blood might flow. However, play was at last continued and my friend went down four tricks.

The Captain's discovery of his error obviously averted a test case, but I now wonder what the position would

have been if he had not turned again. Frankly I do not know. My only feeling is that all such fuss and unpleasantness can be avoided by the players ignoring the compass and reverting to the old plan of calling themselves A and B, and X and Y.

"But when the national pride or the national interests of the French are touched, divisions disappear."—*Daily Express*.

They don't. They get mobilised.

"His jet black hair is a silky white, his short moustache is grey, and he wears horn-rimmed spectacles."—*Evening Paper*.

What colour is this grey moustache of his?

Carthage for the Carthaginians! or, Hands Off Hastings!

CERTAIN European statesmen have recently complained that certain British statesmen have adopted towards the affairs of Europe a "governessy" attitude. If that is so it may be a tactless, but it is not a wholly inappropriate attitude. For Europe at present is like nothing so much as a badly-behaved nursery.

It is not the toughness of the totalitarians that terrifies so much as their infantilism, for with the infant mind no argument is possible. The universe rings with the old childish cries, "Yah! you began it!" "You're another!" "Bags I!" and "That's mine!" If little Tommy has a toy soldier or a tin trumpet, then little Henry must have one too. None of the children can receive the mildest reproof, advice, or even hint without bursting into tears, stamping and scratching. And if there is no other cause for trouble, some forgotten toy is dug out of the nursery cupboard and some old row is started again.

Some optimists have thought that it would be enough to remedy the injustices imposed upon little Fritz and little Antonio by the cruel Treaties of Versailles, etc. But now we have had the spontaneous demonstration by the deputies in the Italian Chamber (delightful, by the way, to see democracy breaking out in those quarters and the people's representatives giving a lead to the Government); and it is clear that we must unbury some very old hatchets indeed.

"Tunis!" it is reported, was the deputies' spontaneous, irrepressible ejaculation. "Tunisia! Sardinia! Nice! Savoy! Bags I!" And already we are all mugging up the history and geography of these places. That at least may be placed to the credit of the naughty boys—they do compel us to get out our maps.

"Bags I Tunis!" says the Italian deputy in 1938. But this is nothing new: people have been saying "Bags I Tunis!" for two thousand seven hundred years. The French did not say "Bags I Tunis!" till 1881; but bag it they did, stepping across from Algeria. This annoyed the Italians, we understand, for they had been thinking of saying "Bags I!" There were then more Italians in the place than Frenchmen, and in 1880 the Italians had bought the British railway from Tunis to Goletta. Yes, we gather from

our encyclopædia that Britain might have said "Bags I!" as well as anyone else. "When the country went bankrupt in 1869 a triple control was established over Tunisian finances, with British, French and Italian 'controllers.'" . . . "After the Franco-German War the embarrassed Bey" (Tunis was then Turkish) "turned towards Great Britain for advice, and a British protectorate . . . was not an impossibility. . . . The railways, lighthouses, gas and waterworks and other concessions and industries were placed in British hands. But in 1878, at the Congress of Berlin, Lord Salisbury agreed to allow France a free hand in Tunisia in return for French acquiescence in the British lease of Cyprus."

Whatever may be thought of that transaction it is pleasant to be able to record that our country is one of the very few which have resisted the temptation to say "Bags I Tunisia!"

There are now, we gather, about the same number of Frenchmen and Italians in Tunisia, and about ten times as many Muslims as either; and so far we have no evidence that the latter are aching to be bagged by anybody else. But we must be fair. It may be that the Italian deputies do not base their claim on the 19th century or the 20th century, but on a date much farther back. Let us go back.

Going back, one is astounded by the number of people who have said "Bags I Tunis!" The Romans said it in 146 B.C. Or rather, as you know, Bobby, they said, "Bags I Carthage!" For the site of Carthage, on which we have sat (and a very disappointing seat it is), is a very short way from the Tunis of to-day. So the Romans had a very early place in the long line of baggers, and, according to the nursery rule of "I bagged first, didn't I, Nanny?" they may be thought to have a powerful title.

But then, they didn't bag first. We must go back a little farther, to about 814 B.C., to the Phœnicians who came from Tyre and Sidon said "Bags I a bit of this!" and founded Carthage.

The Romans, as we have seen, deleted Carthage in 146 B.C. They rebuilt it in 122 B.C. But, before the Romans bagged it, Carthage, as you will recall, Bobby, was a very big Mediterranean noise. Carthage, at one time or another, bagged Sicily, Sardinia, the Balearic Islands and most of Spain. Hanno, son of Hamilcar, about 460 B.C. passed beyond Gibraltar and bagged bits of West Africa, "in the modern Senegal or Guinea and even in Madeira and the Canary Islands."

"In Sicily the war lasted for a century."

In the third century B.C. "Carthage had a population of perhaps 1,000,000" and the well-known Hannibal occurred, who bagged Spain and, approaching by the back-door, said "Bags I Rome!" but failed to bring it off.

But let us get on. The Romans lasted till 439 A.D. and then the Vandals said "Bags I Carthage!" In 697 the Arabs said "Bags I!" in 698 they deleted Carthage; and this time the place remained deleted.

But Tunis popped up across the road, so to speak, and the Arabs bagged it for a long time. In 1148 our old friends the Normans (Roger I. of Sicily) came over and bagged Tunis, till 1160, when they were ejected by Abd-ul-Mumin.

In 1525 the Turks said "Bags I!" and turned out the Arabs; and in spite of some trouble with bagging Spaniards they remained vaguely in charge until the French took over. Most of that time it was merely a "pirate state," they say, but it was not until the Treaty of Sèvres, 1920, that Turkish claims to the Regency were finally renounced!

Poor Tunis! Not even G. B. has suffered so many baggers. Look!

Phœnicians
Romans
Vandals
Arabs
Normans
Arabs
Turks
Spaniards
Turks
Pirates
French

And now, what?

The Arabs seem to have had the longest innings, with 800 odd years; next the Phœnicians—668; the Romans—560; and the Turks—350.

This does not help us much, for no one in the nursery is likely to give Tunisia to the Arabs, though so many of them live there.

But what about the good old rule of "I bagged first"?

Who bagged first?

The Phœnicians.

And who were the Phœnicians?

Non-Aryans. Hopelessly non-Aryans. According to our encyclopædia the Phœnicians were "an early offshoot from the Semitic stock, and belonged to the Canaanite branch of it."

And under TUNIS we read:—

"The history of Tunisia begins

with the establishment of the Phœnician colonies (see PHœNICIA and CARTHAGE). The Punic settlers semi-tized the coast . . . The Romans entered into the heritage of the Carthaginians . . .

Roman papers, we see, are now asserting that in 1881 the French "stole" Tunisia from the Italians, although, as we have shown, the people of Rome have not had effective hands on the place for 1,500 years.

We wish to be perfectly fair to all: but we fear that, if there is to be a new outbreak of bagging, the descendants of the Phœnicians will be entitled to raise their voices.

In other words, the non-Aryans. Carthage for the Carthaginians! And maybe they will want to have Sicily back, and the Balearic Islands as well. A. P. H.

"... he dreams of the day when the whole youth of England will take to the air in gliders."—Daily Mail.

One man's dream is another man's nightmare.

Hero-Worship

Dictators, Kings and Millionaires
Gain fame by different paths,
But I would raise
A song of praise

to
Him who thought of Baths.
What bliss

It is
After a hard day's run
To lie
Like this
In lazy heat!
How sweet

When one is stiff and sore,
While half-an-hour or more
Stems slowly by!

How marvellous
After a day in Town
To ease one's body down
Into warm foam
When one gets home!
Within this white tin wall
The Big Events

That mark our hectic days
Seem through the haze
So insignificant, so small.
Slowly the magic spreads:
In grim parade
Fears, inhibitions, dreads
All melt, all fade.
Instead springs Hope.

The Order of the Bath should be
Our Highest rank of Chivalry!
Where is that soap?

The tap is within reach of my big toe.

Ring out, wild telephone, to the wild sky!

Here I am lying; let me lie.
I will not go.

No. No.

Let others tread the road to fame
Or dance down primrose paths,
But I will steam
And sweetly dream
of

Him who thought of Baths.



"VERY SORRY, GUV'NOR, WE'LL 'AVE TO LEAVE 'EM. WE'VE JUST DISCOVERED 'IM ON THE STAIRS IS NON-UNION."



• "DO WE REMIND YOU OF THE DAYS OF YOUR YOUTH, GRANDPAPA?"

New Light on Old Legends

On Reading a Recent Press Article

SAD when the statements one was led to swallow
When one was young with calm and level brow
Are in one's fulness suddenly knocked hollow;
Take the hyena now;

A beast, we learned, devoid of inner graces,
And yet withal a merry heart and glad,
Who loves to roam the jungle's echoing spaces
Laughing away like mad.

And now I read that food is what he's after
With that gross clamour; when he splits the blue
Nothing is further from his thoughts than laughter.
And there's the ostrich too.

Well-nigh before the days when I could toddle
My mentors brought me up to understand
That when pursued the bird would stick his noddle
Into the desert sand,

Thinking that thus he baffled his pursuer;
I would most gleefully have bet thereon.

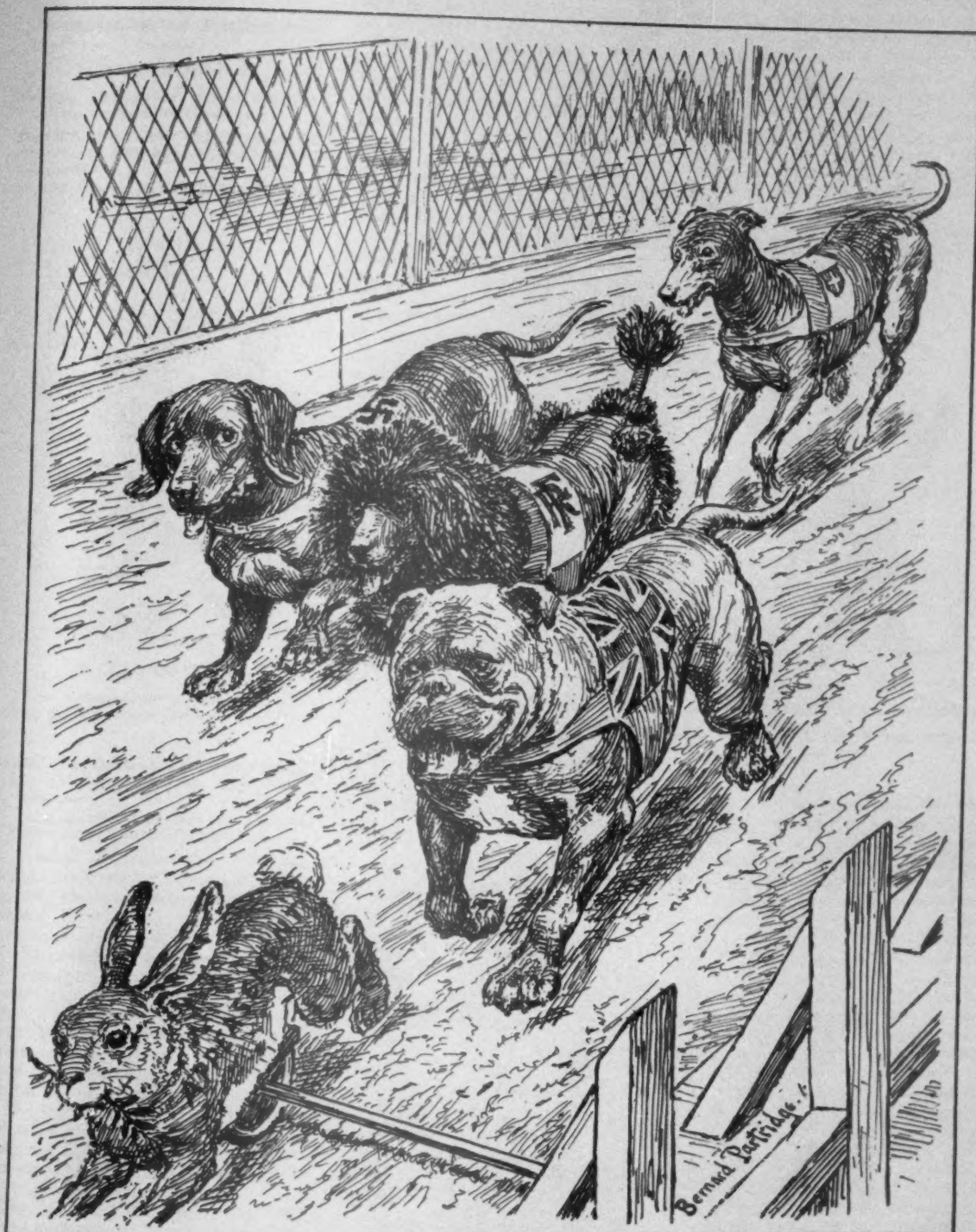
Yet nothing, it appears, could be untruer.
So, too, the dying swan.

You know the tale. How, after suffering mutely
His voiceless span, for one last failing hour
He finds a sudden music absolutely
Peerless in pride and power.

So sweet, so pure, that nightingales aren't in it;
So full that mooing cows are stricken dumb;
I loved that yarn, and now, in half a minute,
It's gone to kingdom come.

These are the things that spell humiliation
For adult minds; mayhap you don't agree,
But there's a darned sight too much information
Flying around for me.

Yet by one saving fact I still keep perky,
One welcome bit these ruinous truths amid;
Turkeys, I chanced to read, don't come from Turkey.
I never said they did. DUM-DUM.



THE DOGS OF PEACE

Voices from the crowd. "Come on, Number Four!"

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, December 5th.—Commons: Debate on Sandys Case.

Tuesday, December 6th.—Lords: Debates on Damage by Rabbits and Japanese.

Commons: Debate on Civil Defence.



A CLARION CALL

"The barbarian is at the gate."—Mr. AMERY in the debate on National Service.

Wednesday, December 7th.—Lords: Debate on Quotation from Speeches in Commons.

Commons: Debates on Colonial Policy and Liberty of Thought.

Monday, December 5th.—The impudent demands for Tunisia, Nice and Corsica which are being made in the Italian Press were the subject of numerous questions this afternoon. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN told the House that the *status quo* in the Mediterranean was covered by the Anglo-Italian Agreement, and that, as he accepted Count CIANO's assurance to our Minister that the Italian Government were not behind the demonstrations, he saw no reason not to go to Rome in January.

The Opposition, however, remained not unnaturally sceptical that political outbursts in Italy were likely to be any more spontaneous than Italian soldiers in Spain were volunteers.

The SANDYS Case, largely forgotten in the excitements which followed it, was raised again when the Report of the Select Committee on the Official Secrets Act was considered. Mr. CHAMBERLAIN advised the House to accept it as settling the personal issue and to

wait for the Committee's conclusions on the general position of Members in relation to the Act. But Mr. WEDGWOOD BENN, attacking Mr. HORE-BELISHA and the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, claimed that their treatment of Mr. SANDYS was nothing less than an infringement of the Bill of Rights. The motion was agreed to and the Committee reappointed, but not before Mr. SANDYS' action had been generally defended and that of the Government heavily criticised. As Mr. CHURCHILL said, it was all very well, but one did not like conversations which begin with "Have a cigarette?" and finish up somewhere in the neighbourhood of Wormwood Scrubs. His suggestion that the SECRETARY FOR WAR had made dangerously optimistic speeches about the state of defence brought Mr. HORE-BELISHA to his feet with a denial that he had done anything of the kind.

Tuesday, December 6th.—Rabbits are playing the devil with our agriculture, and the Japanese are doing the same with our Chinese trade. The Upper House considered both these menaces, and learnt from Lord ELIBANK that Japanese gold reserves were in a parlous way.

The debate which began to-day on the Government's new plans for A.R.P. drew a smaller attendance than might have been expected. Sir JOHN ANDERSON is a clear speaker but deficient in the tricks which capture the imagination of an audience. His scheme had a very mixed reception. The Labour Party were afraid that here was the thin end of the wedge of industrial con-

scription, and declared that a register of property was just as important as a register of human resources; the Liberals called for a bolder lead, and the Conservative right wing complained of what they considered the Government's weakness in not taking powers of compulsion. In between was a limited amount of support and a feeling that a Minister who so clearly meant business should be encouraged.

Sir JOHN explained that the National Service Committees which would be set



THE PARLIAMENTARY CHAMPION

LITTLE BENN TAKES UP THE CUDGELS IN DEFENCE OF BIG BEN.

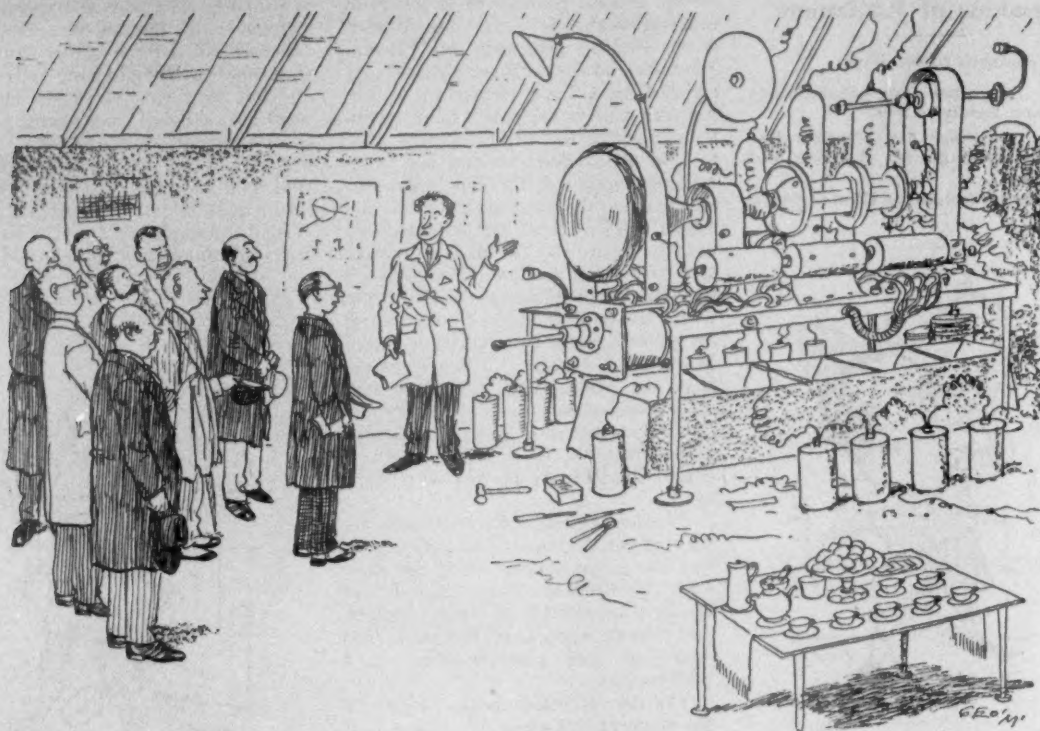
up would be advisory, that the distribution of the new handbook would coincide with a recruiting campaign in the third week of January, and that though recruits would be asked to give an undertaking in writing, no penalties would be attached to it. As for the wisdom of making the National Register a voluntary affair, he was convinced of it. Should a war come the machinery of the census would be ready for making a complete register, but in the meantime the voluntary principle was at stake and there were only a limited number of vacancies to be filled.

Mr. GREENWOOD, quite capable of sensing capitalist graft in a door-knob, objected to Lord-Lieutenants being given jobs on the Committees, and blamed Sir JOHN for not consulting the Unions earlier. Sir PERCY HARRIS accused the Government of lagging behind public opinion and urged that London's A.R.P. should be run by the L.C.C. Mr. AMERY viewed the proposals as utterly inadequate. The Government were only half as afraid of the Germans as they were of the



"NAILED!"

Mr. MALCOLM MacDonald. "SO THAT'S THAT."



"AN ENTIRELY NEW SYSTEM OF TELEVISION, GENTLEMEN. IT CAME TO ME IN A DREAM."

milkmen; a compulsory register was essential. With that point Sir EDWARD GRIGG agreed, and though he approved of voluntary service he asked for a complete plan which should take notice of supplies and strategy. The country wanted a tonic, said Major RAYNER (Conservative); it had been given a sedative.

But the most interesting and entertaining speech of the day was Mr. VERNON BARTLETT's maiden effort, which pleased the House greatly. He attributed his success at Bridgwater in the main to a feeling in the country that freedom of speech was seriously threatened, a feeling which had been strengthened by Mr. CHAMBERLAIN's reproach to Mr. ATTLEE for criticising the Munich Agreement. He himself could see nothing undemocratic even in compulsory service. All that the Government had done since the crisis, apart from the appointment of the PRIVY SEAL, was to exchange one noble lord aged sixty-six for another aged sixty-seven. He begged that there should be no repetition of the "A.R.P. fiasco with its spades, buckets and retired majors"; that pageantry should be used, as it was so successfully in

Germany, to arouse public opinion, and that enlistment under the new scheme should come on a public holiday at the end of a National Voluntary Service Registration Week. Sir JOHN ANDERSON promised to consider these suggestions carefully.



OUR BACK BENCH WHO'S WHO

This realistic work of art
Portrays Sir FREDERICK MILLS,
a Bart.

Wednesday, December 7th.—Their Lordships having decided that it was better not to define too carefully the unwritten rule by which they are not supposed to quote literally from speeches in the other House, remained kind to wild duck and geese.

The debate in the Commons, which was opened by Mr. NOEL BAKER with a motion asking that no Colonial territory should change hands without the consent of its inhabitants, and that in future all colonies not ready for self-government should be held only under a mandate, brought from Mr. MALCOLM MACDONALD the very important statement that the Government were not considering letting any of the territories under their control pass to any other Power. The matter "was not now an issue in practical politics." Pogroms, in fact, are pogroms.

Mr. MANDER's motion alleging that during the crisis Members of the Government had tried to influence the Press and the film industry improperly was rejected by one-hundred-and-seventy-one votes to one-hundred-and-twenty-four, after Sir SAMUEL HOARE had denied all his charges and described him as the champion mare's-nester.

Safeguards

"Poor Johnson-Clitheroe," I said to Colonel Hogg, "is down with influenza. Bad luck, isn't it, just before Christmas."

"Not bad luck," said the Colonel, "but bad management. There is no need for anybody to have influenza if they adopt reasonable precautions. Take plenty of fresh food, plenty of fresh air and, above all, plenty of pepper."

"Pepper?" I queried.

"Pepper," said the Colonel. "I attribute my own immunity from influenza entirely to the large quantities of pepper that I consume. It heats the blood and wards off germs. In the old days at Bhoola-Bhoola the natives never suffered from influenza. Why? Just pepper."

"You don't think," I ventured, "that their freedom from the disease may have been due to climatic conditions? You are fond of telling a story about soap having to be kept in wine-glasses owing to the heat, so I presume that Bhoola-Bhoola is not exactly a cold and draughty place?"

"It's nothing to do with the climate," snorted the Colonel. "Just pepper."

The next person I told about poor Johnson-Clitheroe's condition was Miss Purslip.

"Silly man," she said, "he would have escaped if he had worn a piece of felt inside his shoes. Everybody knows that influenza creeps in through the feet. I offered to give him the pieces of felt if he would tell me what size shoes he wore, but he just laughed and said he never had influenza."

Entwistle attributed Johnson-Clitheroe's influenza to his persistent refusal to take a cup of Globbo before going to bed each night.

"I've not much use for these fancy drinks as a rule," admitted Entwistle, "but Globbo is different. Globbo definitely sustains Stamina While You Sleep. And they are a firm who are absolutely on the square. I won five pounds in their limerick competition of '28, and I've never missed my cup of Globbo since. Influenza can't get into my system."

"Oranges," said Miss Wagg—"that's what Johnson-Clitheroe needs. Oranges ripen in the sun of warm lands, and it stands to reason that they are the perfect antidote for our climate."

"What about bananas?" I said. "They also prosper in hot temperatures, but I've never heard them recommended as specifics against influenza."

Miss Wagg mumbled something about their peculiar shape, and I went on to Commander Quate.

"Exercise is the thing," he said. "It is all a matter of the circulation of the blood. Personally my blood circulates so quickly that germs can no more get into it than you could get into a fast-moving train."

We happened to have Dr. Rivers to dinner, and as he drops his professional reticence after the second glass of port,

I asked him if any of the safeguards suggested were any good.

"Good enough for December," he said; "but wait till January and February. It's true Miss Purslip and the rest of them won't admit they have influenza—they'll call it laryngitis or nerves or bronchitis, and Colonel Hogg may even pass it off as gout, but they all have a week in bed feeling that nobody loves them and looking as if Darwin was right; so it comes to the same thing in the end."



"I'M DOING MY BEST WITH THE FOOTPRINTS, SIR, BUT THESE KIDS WAS HERE FIRST."

At the Play

"STORY OF AN AFRICAN FARM" (NEW)

LET me confess at once that I have never read OLIVE SCHREINER's best-selling kopje-book on which this is based. If I had, perhaps the fun of looking for old friends and comparing scenes with the private personal pictures which spring up in reading would have made me feel differently about the play. For I found it dull, and so, I think, would anyone not devoted either to OLIVE SCHREINER or the veldt.

If one may guess, Mr. MERTON HODGE, the adapter, must have been sadly torn between loyalty to the atmosphere of the book and his natural desire as an experienced dramatist to work up some kind of cumulative interest. Unless popular novels are so overwhelmingly suggestive of the theatre as was *The Constant Nymph*, that is usually the difficulty of shifting them there. Out of respect for readers' treasured associations (and sometimes even for authors' feelings) adapters hesitate to launch their borrowed band of characters on wilder and more exciting courses than were originally laid down for them, even if a little passion here and a little criminal by-play there would greatly improve the story for the stage.

In the case of Mr. HODGE loyalty has won, or so I imagine; had the book offered more substantial material which would fit into the mould of the theatre, then I am sure he would have used it. As it is, the play is vague and broken up. The story seems to lose itself among minor characters who are well-sketched but palpably side-shows, and in the nearest that it gets to a central theme—the fight of an intelligent girl against being sucked into the conventional marriage-baby circle—hares escape in all directions while scarcely a controversial shot is fired. *Lyndall's* aspirations are so extraordinarily indefinite that it seemed to me a pity she should ever have lost faith in just rearing ostriches.

She and *Em*, her half-sister, live on a remote farm which is being run, until *Em* comes of age, by *Tant Sannie*, a coarse-

grained, powerful Dutchwoman whose ideas of human aims and happiness are richly coloured by a lifetime spent in stock-breeding. Her position as a dictator being somewhat insecure, she is a bully; and in addition to the girls

the farm; but *Lyndall* is cut out for tragedy. One evening, when she is sitting up on the kopje, a handsome stranger clambers down beside her; and though he does no more than lend her a thick book on philosophy it is the

beginning of the end. She goes off to Bloemfontein, where she accepts his protection but resolutely refuses to marry him, even when she is having his child. It dies, and so, shortly after, does she, still obsessed by the notion that she is fighting, though what it was exactly she was up against I was quite unable to determine, and the *Stranger* himself appeared equally puzzled by her attitude. He may have felt, as I did, that if she was standing on the straight issue of the emancipation of women she had gone a very odd way about it.

While *Lyndall* is away the farm becomes dominated by a fat Cockney adventurer who flatters *Tant Sannie*, pinches the girls, beats young *Waldo*, and so poisons *Tant Sannie's* mind that she throws out *Uncle Otto*, who dies. This man, *Bonoparte Blenkins*, is too farcically oily either to carry conviction or be funny; he makes the audience feel more uncomfortable than amused.

There is a quality of sincerity in the acting of Miss CURIGWEN LEWIS which helps her to establish *Lyndall*, but I think her approach should be more positive. *Lyndall* is over-gentle to be in the feminist vanguard of a young and masculine country. *Em* is played by Miss ALEXIS FRANCE with her usual bright distinction; she is very expert at interpreting youth. And Miss MARY CLARE's *Tant Sannie* is a sound portrait in strong colour.

Mr. FRANK BIRCH makes us sorry when *Uncle Otto* dies; Mr. RICHARD NEWTON puts boyish life into *Waldo*; Mr. JOHN ROBINSON gives a romantic outline to the *Stranger's* melodramatic appearances; and Mr. AUBREY DEXTER plays the psalm-singing humbug with a command of grandiose manner which is admirable but, as I said, misplaced.

The main setting is interesting as a successful example of a four-roomed interior, two over two. It has been very neatly designed by Mr. CLIFFORD PEMBER. ERIC.



AWKWARD CHANGE OF HEART

Gregory Rose MR. MICHAEL GOUGH
Lyndall MISS CURIGWEN LEWIS
Em MISS ALEXIS FRANCE

she takes it out of a nice old Dutchman called *Uncle Otto* and his son *Waldo*, relations of a sort and also living on the farm.

Em is a lively simple-minded girl who will marry contentedly and carry on



THE OMNIVOROUS MOUNTEBANK

Tant Sannie MISS MARY CLARE
Bonoparte Blenkins MR. AUBREY DEXTER

"THE RIVALS" (OLD VIC)

The Rivals, like the other play of SHERIDAN's which has lived, *The School for Scandal*, and several others, which seem to have had their day, was the work of a very young man and was apparently written for an audience which needed to have every point underlined and rammed home. There is an incongruity between the maturity and sophistication of the well-to-do persons of leisure who cross and double-cross each other in Bath, and the way in which they all have in turn to confide to the audience exactly what is passing through their minds. But if there is no subtlety there is plenty of high spirits and a succession of jokes which are none the worse for being very simple.

In this production at the Old Vic all the characters are firmly and unequivocally played and all leave clear and agreeable impressions. The only doubtful piece of casting seemed to me to be Miss HERMIONE HANNEN as *Lydia Languish*. Miss HANNEN's beauty, her clear-cut features, proud poise, suggested someone not at all likely to be in love with elopement for elopement's sake or filled with the schoolgirl romanticism which the name and the part are meant to suggest. But she made a heroine well worth the winning, if she did not make a counterpoise in character to *Lucy* (Miss FREDA JACKSON) or *Julia* (Miss MERIEL FORBES). All the young women, in short, are full of initiative, and yet the play remains chiefly about men.

Of these men Mr. ANTHONY QUAYLE provided a very engaging and high-spirited *Jack Absolute*, one whose asides to the audience came more naturally than did those of characters less likely to spend a lot of their time chuckling to themselves. Mr. LEWIS CASSON gave a note of the country magistrate's bench to old *Sir Anthony*, treating the character rather kindly, and Miss ELLEN COMPTON's *Mrs. Malaprop*, like a parrot in her splendid plumage, was also full of good-nature and incapable of sustained mortification. Mr. ALEC GUINNESS produced a *Bob Acres* which was reminiscent of

the great character acting in the short-lived revival of *The Road to Ruin*. There was about this *Bob Acres* a triumph of facial make-up which made him like a figure in a life-size Punch

There was a suave over-nourished *Sir Lucius O'Trigger* (Mr. ANDREW CRUICKSHANK) and a very decisive and rather loud-voiced *Faulkland*, given us by Mr. ANDRÉ MOREL, who would,

I think, be more at home in more substantial and less light-hearted plays. Among the minor studies a special word is due to Mr. JOHN KIDD for his portrayal of *Fog*, the sly manservant. Mr. KIDD was plainly enjoying his part enormously.

The production succeeded in completely overcoming any suggestion of formalism and stuffiness such as is easily attached to plays of this period. It is singularly airy, well-lit, full of colour and movement, swiftly and lightly served. I wish the Old Vic would consider producing in these short seasons some of the other SHERIDAN comedies, like *A Trip to Scarborough* or *The Critic*, which otherwise are only to be read and never apparently to be seen. But perhaps they would reply that they have to bow before the British love for familiar things and old friends. Certainly the merriment which greeted even the most familiar and obvious of *Mrs. Malaprop's* inaccuracies showed that here there is a perennial fount of laughter to be tapped.

This production adheres to the old fashion of drop-scenes instead of utilising the same non-committal setting or building a permanent interior in a scene which would serve in general for all outdoor occasions. The drop-scene at Bath, in the old tradition, is particularly effective in conveying to us the atmosphere of the play in the medium in which it has enjoyed for a century-and-a-half its great and obviously undiminished popular favour. D. W.

Hay Diet

"The League knows also of so-called riding school proprietors so impoverished that night and morning they steal out of their rickety stables to crop roadside nettles and grasses." *Weekly Paper.*

"On the whole one would say that in British coastal towns refugees should be small and frequent." *Daily Paper.*

Mice, for example.

**ELDERLY SCHEMERS**

Sir Anthony Absolute . . . Mr. LEWIS CASSON
Mrs. Malaprop . . . Miss ELLEN COMPTON

and Judy show, and brought out the full absurdity of the backwoodsman playing at the fashionable life of Bath.

prop's inaccuracies showed that here

**PREPARATIONS FOR CONQUEST**

Captain Absolute . . . Mr. ANTHONY QUAYLE
Bob Acres . . . Mr. ALEC GUINNESS



"JOHN WAS VERY KEEN AT FIRST TO SNEAK QUIETLY OFF TO A REGISTER-OFFICE. . ."

Tact

I SAID that it was simply shocking—
 Would make her look a dreadful fright.
 I said she'd set the neighbours rocking
 With their laughter half the night.
 I said that if she dared to wear it
 Boldly in a crowded street
 Strong men would howl at it and tear it,
 Trample it beneath their feet.
 I said it made her eyes look beady
 And her ears stick out too wide.
 I said it proved that she was greedy,
 Filled with envy, puffed with pride.

All these things and more I told her
 As I took it from the shelf;
 But, because I daren't be bolder,
 I said them dumbly to myself.
 I praised her woman's intuition,
 Saying, as she bought the hat
 (After all, we get commission):
 "Modom looks divine in that."

Children's Books

DIPPING at random into the majestic pile of Christmas reading that confronts us we find ourselves enchanted by the mere promise of ELEANOR FARJEON's *One Foot in Fairyland* (with special reference to the story of the Little Sempstress who, instead of marrying a Prince disguised as a footman, gets off with a footman disguised as a Prince), or EDEN PHILLPOTT's *Golden Island*, of which it is enough to say that its delightful denizens are daintily depicted by the one and only GEORGE MORROW. MICHAEL JOSEPH publishes both, the one at 7/6 and t'other at 6/-. The same publisher also gives us *Niki Takes a Holiday* (3/6), and a really remarkable circus horse is *Niki. Roo-coo and Panessa* (FREDERICK MULLER, 6/-) is a highly-coloured bit of nonsense about two white pigeons—*reducciones ad absurdum* among pigeons, if Miss LETTICE SANDFORD will permit us to say so. MULLER also gives us *Kuba and the Wolves*, animal stories by a Polish author who ought to know something about wolves (5/-), *Britain's Railways* (6/-), and *John and Mary, Detectives*, by GRACE JAMES (5/-).

Who does not know M. DE BRUNHOFF's immortal *Babar*? Well, here he is again as *Babar at Home* (METHUEN, 7/6), in which *King Babar's* well-known courage and resource are given full and philoprogenitive play. FABER AND FABER weigh in with *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (2/6), a WANDA GAG book; *The Vanishing Mayor of Padstow* (5/-), queer goings-on in Cornwall told by MELVILLE BALFOUR; *Stories for Girls* (7/6), a most attractive-looking omnibus

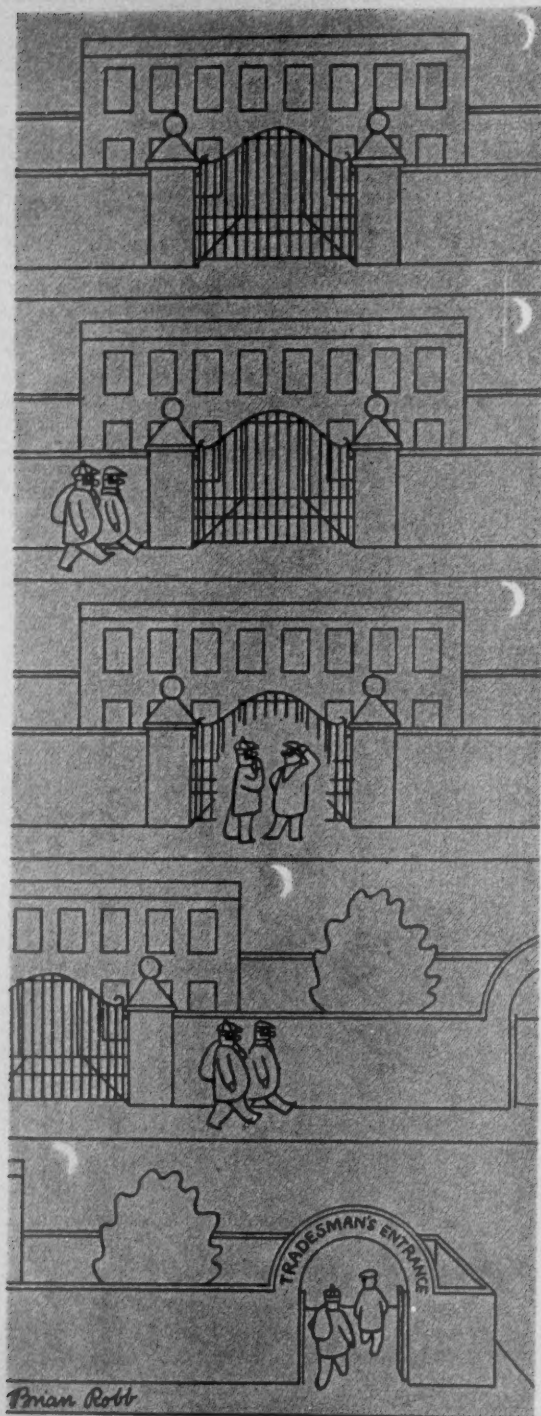
full up inside with all the best people, and *Mustard, Pepper and Salt* (5/-), by ALISON UTTLEY, charming if slightly sentimental fairy-tales. A. & C. BLACK offer us *The Modern Book of Ships* (5/-), after reading which no embryo salt should ever fail to know what ship goes to where or can pursue the fleeing enemy at what rate of knots, *The Silver Eagle Riding School*, by PRIMROSE CUMMING (5/-), and *Lad*, the story of a Border collie, by Lady KITTY RITSON, also 5/-. *Lad*, one need hardly say, is one of those faithful and expert hounds that never dream of having "dog's dudgeon." *Yinka-Tu the Yak*, by ALICE ALISON LIDE, beautifully depicted by KUET WIESE (5/-), comes to us from COUNTRY LIFE, and must surely be the official creature so highly commended by Mr. HILAIRE BELLOC, so tell your papa where the book can be found, if not the Yak itself, and he may buy you one. *High Street* (7/6), by the same publishers, is a book about shops which one fears might be a dangerous inducement to playing shops if shops were really as exciting as all that. *Grig the Greyhound* is another of those doggy books for doggy people, this time by MARK FLINT and illustrated by LIONEL EDWARDS, R.I. (5/-). *Fortune's Foal*, by GARLAND BULLIVANT and ANNE BULLEN

(5/-), is another of those horsey books—all horse etiquette and no hoarse laughs—and so is *Joey*, by J. & T. IVESTER LLOYD (5/-), only more "a-huntin' we will go," if you get us. *Oboli, Boboli and Little Joboli*, by BERNARD and ELINOR DARWIN (5/-), is more to our liking, being fairy animal stories and not, as you might expect, about magic niblicks and things like that.

JONATHAN CAPE adds *The Indian Twins* (LUCY FITCH PERKINS, 3/6) to all the other sets of twins that have been arriving with Christmas-like punctuality for these many years. From the same publishers comes *Perri, The Youth of a Squirrel*, by FELIX SALTEN (5/-), and introduced, moreover, by no less a person than the dendrophile Mr. BEVERLEY NICHOLS. Now for Messrs. COLLINS. *Epaminondas and the Lettices*, by CONSTANCE EGAN (2/-), is the perfect bedside book for the very young and a worthy companion to *Peter Rabbit* and company (one should perhaps add that *Epaminondas* is no Greek General but a young coloured gentleman); *Sambo and Susan* (5/-), on the contrary, are blue-blooded Britons, a pair of priceless steeds whose epic is written and illustrated by KATHARINE HARRISON-WALLACE, aged twelve, and vouched for by her godfather, the Duke of ATHOLL. There is also a fox story and a salmon story and some blank pages on which the eager young recipient can try writing a story himself or herself and perhaps get a prize of £2.2.0 from the publishers. *Plain Jane* (6/-) is a pony, and MARY COLVILLE, who writes about her and draws her, is all of thirteen and, if we are any judge, will soon be setting Tantivy Towers by the ears. And to conclude COLLINS' little lot, *Puppy and the Cat Hodge*, by LORNA LEWIS and LUCY DAWSON (5/-), is about cats and puppies who

are anything but deficient in dudgeon. *Tawny Goes Hunting*, ALLEN CHAFFEE and PAUL BRANSOM (6/-), is great open spaces stuff and good. *The Great Mr. Toad*, by MARJORIE BEEVERS (3/6), would be well enough if there were room in our country's literature for more than one *Mr. Toad*. CICELY ENGLEFIELD's *Bennie Black Lamb* has the most charming woodcuts—talk about who put the spring in lamb—and costs you only a couple of bob. In *Mumfie's Magic Box* (5/-) our small pachydermatous hero—or rather Miss KATHERINE TOZER's—is with us again, and many are the adventures thereof. All these four masterpieces or mistresspieces are ours (we hope) by courtesy of JOHN MURRAY. HEINEMANN gives us only *Dog Days* (12/6), but if you find an "eyeful" of K. F. BARKER's O.K. barkers in your stocking you should be satisfied. All the same we hold that Mr. BARKER's dogs could also do with a bit more endudgeoning. Coming to the offerings of THE BODLEY HEAD one fears that the admirable photography of *The Magic Train* (3/6) may be lost on our young engineers. On the other hand, in *The Compass Points North*, M. E. ATKINSON (7/6), the train is merely the medium that bears us towards many





PUNCTILIO

and strange adventures. *Nightlight Tattoo*, M. T. CANDLER (5/-), is also adventures—the sort you are bound to have when toy soldiers come to life, while as for *Larky Legends*, NORMAN HUNTER and JAMES ARNOLD (6/-), well, if you think that debunking important grown-ups is in good taste, don't let us keep you from it. GRACE HUXTABLE calls *Little Pink Crystals* (6/-) a magic story, and as she wrote it who should know better? *Plimplomplimps* is a Jack-in-the-Box, an alien if you ask us, but vouched for by Mr. COMPTON MACKENZIE, who would never introduce us to anything not quite nice. His Hans Andersenish doings, as related by JULIUS BERSTL, are yours for 5/-. And lastly and wholly delightful there is *The Story of Pompom* (a little poodle), by GRAHAM SHEPARD (3/6).

WARWICK LONDON has illustrated *Bear, Mouse and Waterbeetle* (JOHN HASTINGS TURNER, 6/-), with a whole Noah's Ark of zoological personages, while LORD BADEN-POWELL writes more austere of *Birds and Beasts in Africa* (4/6), and A. HILLMAN and WALTER W. SKEAT are just as fascinating, though slightly less austere, in *Salam the Mouse Deer* (7/6), being *Wonder Stories of the Malayan Forest*. Reviving, as it does, folk-tales derived from the dawn days when all the world was inhabited by children, this book possibly deserves the title of "The book of the season." *Hedgehog's Holiday*, GEOFFREY FORD (6/-), owes its inspiration to *The Wind in the Willows*, but is perhaps none the worse for that. The last-named three books are published by MACMILLAN, *Bear, Mouse and Waterbeetle* by METHUEN (6/-).

FROM BLACKWELL, less fecund this year than usual, come *The Stage-Struck Seal*, by JAMES HULL (2/6), *Dunderpate*, by MARGARET and MARY BAKER (3/6), and *Thirty Fables* by our old friend BENJAMIN RABIER, and we need hardly tell you that there is a something about a RABIER goose or a RABIER lion that differentiates it from any other goose or lion you ever saw. *Light Over Lundy* (7/6) is EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE'S contribution to the Christmas revels, described as "an exciting story of spies and riding." What Mr. S. P. B. MAIS knows about spies and riding we do not pretend to know, but what he does not know about Lundy we assume is not worth knowing. G. J. PALMER, LTD., gives us *Buffie's Book*, otherwise the *Church Times Omnibus*, an admirable annual for the small fry of the ecclesiastical classes. DENTS weigh in with *Sam* (5/-), being cat photographs which tend to make you extremely glad that cats aren't ten feet long, *The Circus is Coming* (NOEL STREATFIELD, 6/-), and don't believe Miss STREATFIELD when she says she "doesn't know much about circuses," and *She Shall Have Music* (KITTY BARNE, 6/-); *Twin Kids*, and as gambolsome kids as you could wish for (INEZ HOGAN, 2/6), and *Trudi and Hansel* (AVERIL DEMUTH, 6/-), an Austrian fairy-story which must have been written when there were more nice giants in the Tyrol and no unpleasant authoritarians. BURNS AND OATES are responsible for *The Dragon and the Mosquito*, most satisfactory tales by one R. J. MCGREGOR (2/6); DUCKWORTH for *Stories from History* (HUGH ROSS WILLIAMSON, 2/6), which aren't stories at all but real "dramma"; CONSTABLE for *Journey of Tapiola* (R. NATHAN, 2/6), *Tapiola* being a Yorkshire terrier with that nice blend of sophistication and spirituality that a Hollywood dog should have, and LOVAT DICKSON for *Merry Slimtails* (MARY CHELL, 2/6), which is about mice, if you can abear the little brutes. We seem to have got BURNS AND OATES a bit tangled up, for here are *The Mystery Man in the Tower* (HUGH CHICHESTER, 3/6), *Tob and His Dog* (GUY RAWLENCE, 3/6), *The Half-Deck of the "Bradstock"* (DOUGLAS V. DUFF, 3/6), and *More About Wurzel Gummidge* (BARBARA EUPHAN TODD, 3/6), which all leal Wurzel Gummidgers will be glad to meet again. An old



"OH COME ALONG, IAN."

"I'M WAITING TILL I HEAT UP."

friend, the TALBOT PRESS of Dublin, sends us *The Gentle Mountain* (WINIFRED LETTS), no other than Slieve Gullion itself, and *The Glen of Sheep* (DOROTHY M. LARGE), at 3/6 apiece and well worth it, for they have the rich imagery which is the birthright of the black Irish. The UNIVERSITY OF LONDON PRESS has so far forgotten itself and Professor LASKI as to produce *Fifteen Tales for Lively Children* (MARGARET BAKER, 2/9) and *Tell Me a Tale* (ELIZABETH CLARK, 2/6). CLIFFORD WEBB'S *Animals from Everywhere* are all that the Very Young could desire, even if his "deer" are really antelopes, and are published by WARNE for 5/-. HUTCHINSON at the same figure give us *Lords of the Household*, by HENRY SAVAGE, a book about cats which might more gallantly have been called *Ladies of the Household*, the male of the species being usually busy trying to lord it over somebody else's household. HEFFER of Cambridge contribute *The Microbe Man* (ELEANOR DOORLY, 4/6), a child's Life of PASTEUR, the man who isolated *Styphingococcus insomnia var. horribilis*, while HAMISH HAMILTON is a veritable Father Christmas all to himself with *Babette* (CLARE TURLAY NEWBERRY, 4/6), a perfectly adorable kitten, *Noodle* (MUNRO LEAF and LUDWIG BEMELMANS, 3/6), who is the sort of dachshund you encounter after too much lobster, *Christmas at the Four Paws Club* (ABBIE PHILLIPS WALKER, 5/-), *Pepito* (SHEILA HAWKINS, 7/6), as brave a *muchacho* (with as redoubtable a donkey) as ever came out

of Spain, and *Appleby John*, by the same authoress (7/6). We mentioned FREDERICK WARNE, but that was before our eye had lit (or should it be "lighted"?) on eleven distinct and separate boys' and girls' books, each thrilling to the last page, and each at 3/6, but the names of which space compels us to withhold. From the indefatigable FREDERICK W. also come *Dog Nelson, A.B.* (3/6), who ought to be some sea-dog since Vice-Admiral GORDON CAMPBELL, V.C., D.S.O., is his faithful chronicler, and *Harry Hemsley's Stories for Children* (2/6), which rather pull the grown-ups' legs. WARD, LOCK, purveyors of juvenile adventure no less redoubtable than the aforementioned WARNE, send us *Batling Through*, by JOHN F. WESTERMAN (3/6), *The Making of Mara*, by WINIFRED NORLING at 2/6, a brace of "Wonder Books," and a hair-curling "Wild West" picture-book, all Mounties and things, for a mere eightpence. And that seems to be the lot, except for some RAPHAEL TUCK picture-books for the mere bantlings; a SUSAN ERTZ book, *Black, White and Caroline* (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 5/-), (only don't let the title mislead you, *Caroline* is all white too); a couple of ROSE FYLEMAN animal books, *Quipic the Hedgehog* and *Mischief the Squirrel*, published by GEORGE ALLEN and UNWIN, and a brace of horsey books, *My Mare Kitty*, by RALPH GRAVES, at 3/6, from ARROWSMITH, and *Bred in the Bone*, by SHIRLEY FAULKNER HORNE and PETER BIEGEL, at 6/- from WITHERBY.

DOUGLAS.



Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Spain Before The Deluge

IN Spain for the most part old men follow the shade as sedulously as their contemporaries here the sun—a state of things that conditions both the daily round and the art that springs from it. The Argentine proverb, "Let death come to me from Spain," preceded the mortal chaos of to-day, as did the grim beauty which Sir MUIRHEAD and Lady BONE recorded in their two great folios of *Old Spain*. Her text, now reproduced with seventeen plates and fifty new illustrations, constitutes *Days in Old Spain* (MACMILLAN, 12/6), a record of past glories indeed, but also a reminder of the enduring virtues of the Spanish people. It is the people of whom Lady BONE writes: the poor with their unfailing merriment and good manners and such friends of the poor as the nuns and doctors of "El Sanatorio Purísima Concepción," whose very solicitude has "the repose of those who seek no further." As for the etchings, from the proud elaboration of "The Tomb of Isabella, Granada," to the frugal pathos of "The Christ, San Feliu, Gerona," here are all the resources of a magnificently interpretative technique at the service of a largely vanished world.

Cruising with Dr. Beebe

DR. WILLIAM BEEBE, who has spent many years exploring the life of jungles, unfrequented seas and uninhabited islands, in his latest book, *Zaca Venture* (THE BODLEY HEAD, 12/6), deals with a cruise to the Gulf of California in an eighty-ton schooner. The author in his description of this area as a naturalist's paradise does not, apparently, overstate the case. One can indeed forgive him when his adjectives sometimes show symptoms of overstrain. A high spot in this wonderful voyage was undoubtedly the encounter with a large whale shark. This fifty-foot sea rover, discovered little more than a century ago, is known by only about eighty specimens. Despite its vast size it feeds, as do certain whales, upon minute animal life and is quite inoffensive to man. Although an attempt to harpoon the specimen proved abortive, a fine series of photographs were taken, and these served largely in the building of a life-size coloured model now adorning the Fish Gallery in the Natural History Museum at South Kensington. Quite as interesting, if less startling, are



RECENT IMPROVEMENTS IN SCIENCE

George du Maurier, in the issue of December 14th, 1878
(to which readers are referred for a fuller explanation.)

encounters with armies of crabs, turtles, flying-fish and innumerable sea-birds. The pelican figures largely throughout the book, and there are entertaining descriptions of how

certain small gulls run in and out of the huge bills of these birds and purloin fish with the pelican's apparent approval. The photographs illustrating this work are as vivid as the prose and should make most of us view the "winter cruising" advertisements and leaflets more enviously than ever.

4.30 for Lossiemouth

There are two urgent services to be rendered to the democratic voter. You can depict the slack-jointed puppet he is fast becoming or you can go behind the scenes and portray his manipulators. In seeking to perform the last service *The Tragedy of Ramsay MacDonald* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 15/-) very efficiently performs the first; and if in the process it necessarily seems to flout that reverence for the dead which is mainly consideration for the living, it has its charitable limitations and omits even the best *mot* on the "biscuit" scandal of 1924. The author, Mr. L. MACNEILL WEIR, M.P., was RAMSAY MACDONALD's Parliamentary Private Secretary for eight years. He resigned when his chief became titular head of the "National Government"; in other words, a "rubber stamp" to endorse the decisions of Mr. BALDWIN. MACDONALD is indicted not as a private individual but as the politician who made "National Government" possible, and incidentally the League impossible—"the greatest disaster that has befallen . . . the world since the War." It is said in America that when the British fall they always drop on their feet—or somebody else's. In MACDONALD's case the feet were the feet of Labour.

Great Adventures

Himalyan Quest (NICHOLSON AND WATSON, 21/-), edited and partly written by PAUL BAUER, ably translated from the German by E. G. HALL, and sympathetically prefaced by Sir FRANCIS YOUNGHUSBAND, is a book which, both for its letterpress and illustrations, well deserves appreciative attention. In it can be found firstly a dramatic account of the successful German attempt to ascend Siniolchum, and then the story of the tragic and glorious effort in 1937 to conquer Nanga Parbat. "Many great expeditions have gone out to the Himalayas," Sir FRANCIS has written, "but none—not even the Everest Expedition—has set forth with a nobler spirit than these Germans displayed." To add to this tribute would be superfluous, but no one can read of those young mountaineers who lost their lives on Nanga Parbat without realising its truth. Nor in these supreme endeavours ought the porters, whose assistance made the attempts possible, to be forgotten.

Nearly a hundred photographs of remarkable quality add to the value of this volume.

Low Finance

Mr. GATHORNE COOKSON's *Murder Pays No Dividends* (MULLER, 7/6) contains a problem that is fairly stated and cleverly conceived. Moreover a helpful plan is included of the premises in which the corpse of the manager of Cyclone Motors, Ltd., was discovered. This manager in his lifetime was an offensive person and his death caused no regret, but to find out by whom he had been killed is a genuine puzzle. It is a pity that Mr. COOKSON has treated his Chief Constable so scornfully, and *Inspector Maddock* of Scotland Yard could not have been surprised when a candid friend said to him, "We don't want a homily . . . just a straightforward story." But it is not generous, even if it is fair, to pick holes in a story which will give ample enjoyment to the shrewdest reader.

Bitter Medicine

Brule Hatterick was the most famous surgeon in Chicago and also one of those strong silent men who only reveal their best in a crisis. But in spite of all this no one can read many pages of *The Glass Slipper* (COLLINS, 7/6) without discovering that to be his second wife was to occupy a most unenviable position. In quick succession *Crystal Hatterick*, who had nursed *Brule's* first wife, was suspected of poisoning her patient, then of killing the girl who had shared the nursing with her, and lastly of slaying a maid. Possibly the agonies of *Crystal* are distributed by too lavish a hand, but it is quite certain that Miss M. G. EBERHART's reputation for creating an atmo-

sphere of tension will be enhanced by this tale of a young wife's troubles. And in a smart woman called *Alicia Pelham* Miss EBERHART, far from sparing her own sex, has drawn one of the most unpleasant vixens in fiction.

Mr. Punch on Tour

At Dundee, from December 19th to January 14th, 1939, the Exhibition of the Original Work of Modern "Punch" Artists will be on view at the Corporation Art Galleries. The Exhibition will be shown later at Kilmarnock, Blackburn, Lancaster and Burnley.

Invitations to visit the Exhibition at any of these places will be gladly sent to readers if they apply to the Secretary, "Punch" Offices, 10, Bouverie Street, London, E.C.4.

"SO SORRY TO HAVE KEPT YOU WAITING, BUT I'M AFRAID I JUST CAN'T QUITE LAY MY HAND ON YOUR LETTER FOR THE MOMENT."



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Charivaria

An American producer has just paid what is said to be a record sum for a collection of old anecdotes and stories. We hope his pantomime will be a success.

★ ★ ★

Astounding Government Discovery

"No measures would do good, Lord Plymouth added, unless they were effective."—*Daily Telegraph*.

★ ★ ★

"Some people seem to go through the winter haunted by the possibility of pipes being frozen," says a housewife. The only thing to do is to hope for the best and prepare for the burst.

★ ★ ★

"The cyclist who left Taunton for Glasgow has arrived in Taunton," says a local paper. Thus constituting a new record in back-peddalling.

★ ★ ★



We read that sixty-eight per cent. of London's smoke is caused by domestic chimneys. "Sweeping" is the only word to describe the action called for.

★ ★ ★

"It isn't the slightest use trying to feed a pelican on odd scraps," remarks a zoologist. That doesn't fill the bill at all.

★ ★ ★

Somebody writing to a daily newspaper wants to know where glue comes from. According to our limited experience, the wrong end of the tube.

★ ★ ★

"We'll see," she answered eagerly. His suit hung on him, and the looseness of his collar around his neck made her throat tighten."

Good Housekeeping.

So they swapped collars and lived happily ever after.



It is claimed that holes torn in home-woven Harris tweed can be immediately mended merely by pulling the edges of the material together. Why not try it on your billiard-table?

★ ★ ★

"FOUR INTERNATIONAL TRIALS"
Sports Page Heading.

No names, no pack-drill.

★ ★ ★

Following the attack on Lord BALDWIN a Nazi newspaper pointed out that Herr HITLER is a non-smoker. Can this have been a

more than usually delicate hint to the ex-Premier to pipe down?

★ ★ ★

A West-End actor admits that he made five pounds clear profit as a result of investing in a half-share in a pedigree pig six months ago. Next time perhaps he'll go the whole hog.

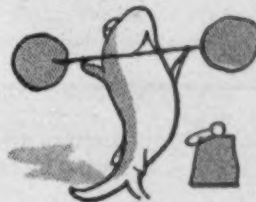
★ ★ ★

"I have never had a cold in the head since I started the daily cold bath habit," writes a correspondent. It's the same with our gold-fish.

★ ★ ★

"Don't accept gifts from people you've never met," we are warned. Not even if it's Santa Claus?

★ ★ ★



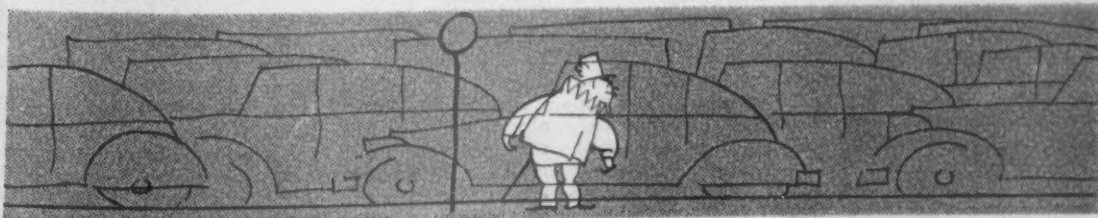
"Mr. Gallacher (Com., Fife W.), speaking from the same experience, thought well-behaved prisoners should be allowed to go out for week-ends every few months to see their friends.

The Prime Minister will make a statement about his Rome visit in the House of Commons this afternoon."—*News Chronicle*.

Is that quite kind?

★ ★ ★

"This noisy modern world of ours must be very trying to old-fashioned ghosts," remarks a writer. Some of the poor things can hardly hear themselves shriek.





"HALLO, GRUMPY!"

Letters to Officialdom

XXVI.—Re Christmas Shopping

To Messrs. Burnish and Garnish, Ltd., Oxhyde Circus, London, W.

DEAR SIRs,—Yesterday my wife and I did all our Christmas shopping at your store. (Cursett is the name: Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Cursett, Biggott's House, Slow-on-the-Rum, near Rumborough, Wilts.) We are not used to large department stores like yours, but friends persuaded us this year to do our Christmas shopping in this way "because everything is under one roof and it saves so much time and trouble, and of course journeying about."

This was their recommendation and I quote it with some bitterness. Indeed I am writing now to say that we shall neither patronise your store again nor recommend it to our friends unless apologies are offered us and suitable redress is instantly forthcoming for the gross discomfort and the vexing inconveniences that we experienced.

Kindly note first of all that I am returning under separate cover several purchases which neither of us made. If we had not opened these parcels on our return my Uncle Joseph, who is eighty, would have been the recipient of an egg-whisk instead of a pipe-rack, and my brother, who occupies a political post, the recipient of a copy of *How to Be a Gentleman* instead of a simplified edition of Bagehot's *English*

Constitution. Mind you, I am not saying that a copy of *How to Be a Gentleman* would not prove helpful to my brother: what I am saying is that he would resent having it given him. Similarly Miss Elderleigh Leigh-Elder, a close friend of ours and a keen social worker, would strongly resent being given a copy of *How to Prepare for Baby* instead of a book on raffia-work.

These mistakes, however, can be rectified, though I must say that I deplore their commission. But what I deplore more is the mismanagement of the lifts in your establishment. They are no help at all, but just a confounded nuisance. If my wife and I stood just inside the gates in order to get out easily we were swept violently into the rear of the machine by incoming people or else swept violently out of the machine by outgoing people, or else jammed between the incoming and outgoing people and tacitly abused by all of them for being in the way. Of course we apologised. Then the lift-girl said we were in the way of the gates, so we apologised to her and stepped back. Then we had to apologise to the people behind for treading on their feet. By this time the atmosphere in the lift was so hostile that we got out at the next floor and waited for another lift.

After a time, not wishing to incur further resentment, we allowed ourselves to be pushed to the rear of the lift. The consequence of this was that we couldn't get out again until the lift reached the top-floor or the basement. We sought to counter this drawback by using the stairs. So if we were on the ground-floor and wished to go to the second

floor we took the lift to the top floor and then walked down by the stairs. Of course we had to keep our wits about us when we were using the stairs too, otherwise we found ourselves in the staff's quarters or the manager's office or the cloakrooms or the boiler-room. Once, when we were on the top floor, we walked out of the door on to the fire-escape.

But let me say that the stairs had this advantage. We escaped the embarrassment of standing beside lift-girls dressed in jodhpurs, a mess-jacket, a tam-o'-shanter and sandals. Why do you insist on these girls wearing such a rig-out? There must be many people like myself who deplore it; many who would rather they performed their duties without these ridiculous clothes on.

Before long of course my wife became very tired, because we soon discovered that this "shopping under one roof" not only involved continual climbing up and down with an increasing load of parcels but also walking through subways to the annexe, crossing bridges to the extension, and traversing the main street to the new building. So presently we got into a lift to go up to the restaurant on the top floor. In a moment or two we were ejected with the other fifty passengers into the basement.

Bewildered and angry, we gave up the idea of refreshment and decided to make our remaining purchases in this part of the shop. So we bought gifts, feverishly bought gifts, all sorts of gifts, too many gifts, mostly useless gifts, from the counters around displaying meat-safes, mincing-machines, fretwork outfits, blow-lamps, bicycle-lamps, motor-horns, roofing-felt, first-aid outfits, hose-pipes and weathercocks in modern antique brass. The assistant said that a weathercock would be an original gift. We thought so too, so we bought three. But they were too heavy to carry, so we changed them for three imitation pewter chimney-cowls. In the process one of the weathercocks slewed round and knocked down a pile of china.

Requiring money to pay for the damage I tried to extract my wallet from my inner pocket without letting go of my parcels, whereupon I was suddenly seized with severe cramp. I dropped six parcels, extended my arm to its full length, hit someone on the chest and knocked a blow-lamp into a bowl of goldfish. In the resulting confusion my wife trod on a motor-horn. Then the garden-hose entangled itself round my legs and threw me backwards into a beaten copper coal-bucket.

But why go on? What I have already written is enough to show you that our Christmas shopping expedition was nothing less than a nightmare. Even when the maddening episode described above was straightened out and all our packages had been wrapped up again, my wife's purse was found to be missing. The assistant said she had put it in one of the parcels. So we unpacked them all again and found it in the watering-can. And it was stuck there; we couldn't extricate it. The consequence was that as I had paid out all my money for the broken china my wife had to carry the watering-can round London for the rest of the day.

You will appreciate therefore that some sort of compensation is due to us for this intolerable and costly experience, as a result of which we shall have to give my wife's sister a blow-lamp, my Aunt Josephine a motor-horn, my Cousin Reginald, who is in the Navy, a roll of roofing-felt, and my wife's mother an imitation pewter chimney-cowl. We cannot afford to throw away these purchases and we prefer to give them, ludicrous as they are, rather than set foot inside your store again to change them for more suitable gifts.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—We used up the contents of the first-aid outfit on ourselves after being caught in one of the revolving-doors when leaving your store.

The Patient Commercial Traveller and the Presiding Genius

A PATIENT Commercial Traveller had visited a certain retail establishment more often than he could remember and was already on advanced winking terms with the younger lady-assistants. He was however as yet not only unknown but unnoticed by the Presiding Genius, an elderly and short-sighted gentleman who was understood to hold the post of Buyer but who appeared to divide his time between the pacification of aged female customers and the vilification of his staff. One day the Patient Commercial Traveller, who was constantly being chivvied by his Directors for not opening this valuable account, resolved to take the initiative. Knowing from weary hours spent waiting and watching on the borderland not only the elementary geography of the department but also the most intimate details of its inner secret recesses, and having closely studied the habits of the Presiding Genius in which he had now become versed almost to anthropological standards, the Patient Commercial Traveller strolled nonchalantly into the jungle, whipped the Buyer's order-book off the back counter and retreated to a neighbouring café. There he wrote out for himself an order of satisfactory proportions. Returning to the shop he advanced again into the hinterland, holding the order-book open in a professional manner and in a shrill falsetto uttered the magic words, "Sane, please." The Presiding Genius immediately rushed forward, hastily scribbled the coveted initials, and was swallowed up in a gathering swarm of females. The order was duly executed, the Patient Commercial Traveller's Directors were delighted, and the Presiding Genius was gratified to notice an unaccountable improvement in the variety of his stock and a consequent appeasement of the old ladies which was very comforting.

Moral: WHERE THERE'S A WILL THERE'S A WAY.



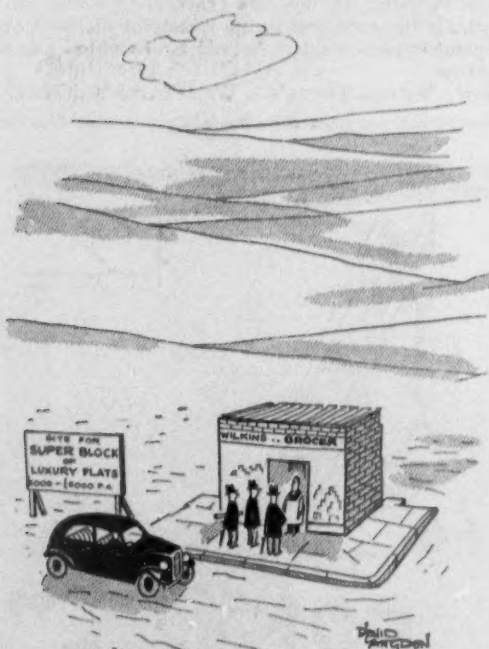
Hymn to the Great Ones

O well-belovéd leaders
And potentates sublime,
We come to you as pleaders
Because it's Christmas-time.
Illustrious banditti,
Contemptuous of our codes,
Look down to-day in pity
On democratic toads.

For those whose degradation
Is far too deep to feel
The natural aspiration
To ransack and to steal,
For those who loot no mansion,
For those who fail to seek
Legitimate expansion
By torturing the weak,

Have mercy and have kindness,
Indomitable thugs,
Although we sit in blindness
And move about like slugs.
Now let the wine go gurgling
And drain your wassail-bowls—
Not everyone likes burgling,
But all of us have souls.

EVOE.



"WE'RE FRIGHTFULLY SORRY, MR. WILKINS, BUT WE'VE DECIDED NOT TO BUILD."

Assistant Masters : Are They Insane?

(I had hoped to give some extracts relating to end of term activities from A. J. Wentworth's diary this week, but his notes on this aspect of school life are rather voluminous and need more careful editing than I can devote to them at the moment. Instead I take a page, more or less at random, dated December 4th, 1936. It sheds a certain light on the vexed problem of punishment.)

Friday. Gilbert and Rawlinson were talking about discipline in the Common Room the other day, when we were all hanging up our gowns after morning school, and Rawlinson suddenly said, "You'd better ask A. J. about that. He's the expert on lines in these parts."

"I see nothing to laugh at in that, Rawlinson," I said, colouring up, and I added that, though I very much disliked giving impositions, it was sometimes necessary in order to keep the boys up to concert pitch.

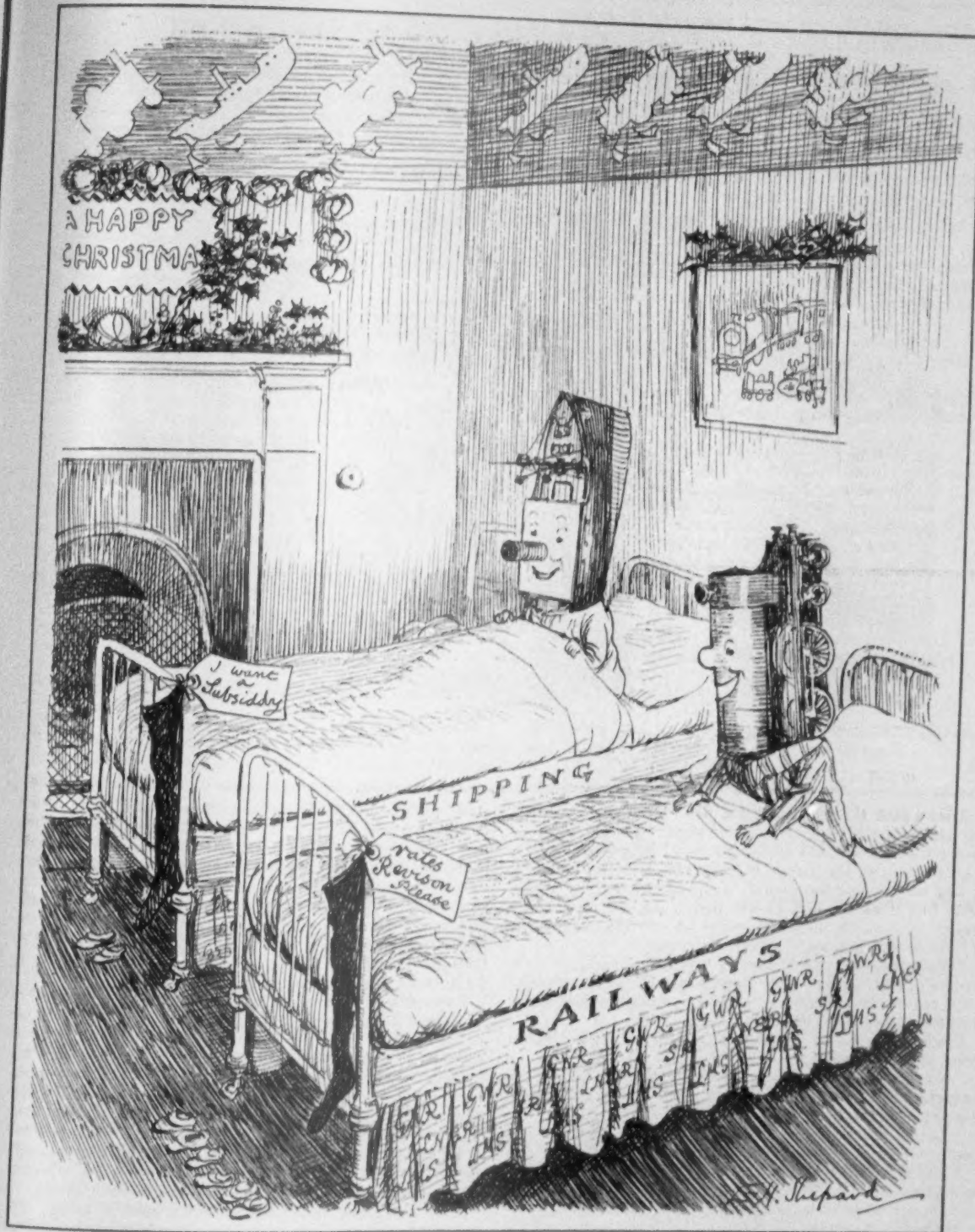
"Your IIIA lot were at concert pitch all right this morning," said Goodman. "I heard them from the library."

"Anyway, Rawlinson," I said, ignoring Goodman, who can think of nothing but cricket, cricket, cricket, "I think it better to set a few lines than to keep a whole form in on a fine afternoon, as some people do."

Rawlinson, knowing very well what I meant, replied that he had kept the Lower Fourth in because they seemed incapable of learning the second page of principal parts, not because they had tied his bootlaces together or put soot in his waistcoat-pockets. This silly and exaggerated reference to a forgotten incident of my apprentice-days angered me very much and I went in to lunch without another word. My temper had been a little frayed that morning by Matron in one of her fussy moods. She started some long rigmarole after Prayers about the boys' socks, and when I attempted to explain that the boys' socks had nothing whatever to do with me she became almost impertinent. "Pardon me, Mr. Wentworth," she said, "but the boys' socks have a great deal to do with me" (a thing I had never dreamed of denying), "and I cannot possibly run my department properly without reasonable co-operation from the masters. What is the use of my laying out clean socks for the boys on Sunday morning if they are to be taken out for a walk in the afternoon through some of the muddiest places in Wilminster? The state that those boys' feet were in, Mr. Wentworth! It's really too bad." After some further inconclusive talk we parted, but the incident rankled. I am here to teach, not to trifle with hosiery.

I only mention this to explain why I was perhaps a little hasty with Rawlinson later in the day.

The talk about impositions recurred to me to-day when Mason showed up fifty lines I had had to give him for making an uncouth noise. As he handed them in immediately after break and I had only set them during the first period I asked him how he had managed to find time to do them, and he explained that he had done them in advance at the week-end. This aroused my suspicions and I looked more closely at the lines, only to find that they were not lines at all but some old history notes torn bodily from an exercise-book. Mason then said that he had done it as a protest against the system of giving lines, which he regarded as a rotten sort of impot. Naturally no self-respecting master can allow the boys to dictate to him the kind of punishment they prefer, and I told Mason pretty sharply to go to his desk and sit down; but what he had said, coupled with Rawlinson's remarks, made me wonder whether I could not devise some more satisfactory disciplinary measure.



HERE'S HOPING!



"WHICH WINDOW IS YOUR BEDROOM?"

After a little thought I hit on a plan. First I wrote down the names of the boys on a slip of paper. Then I held this up for them to see and explained that I proposed to mark a cross against the name of any boy who misbehaved in any way during the period. I should say nothing at the time, but if at the end of the period any boy had three crosses against his name he would be severely dealt with.

"What will happen?" asked Hillman.

"Wait and see, my friend," I replied. I had not, as a matter of fact, made up my mind about this, but naturally I did not let the boys know. If there is one thing that really frightens them it is suspense.

Clarke then asked whether a boy would only get one cross at a time, whatever he did.

"No, Clarke," I replied. "I shall give *two* crosses for impertinence;" and I immediately made two marks against his name on the list.

"That's not fair, Sir," he cried. "I didn't know we'd begun."

I stared at him without a word until one of us was forced to look away.

"Do you want to have a *third* cross?" I asked quietly.

He made no reply, and I turned to Atkins, who had his hand up,

"May I ask a question, Sir?"

"If it is a sensible one—yes," I said, without much hope.

"I only wondered if Sapoulos gets a cross if he cries, Sir."

"Be careful, Atkins," I warned him, taking up my pencil, and I was glad to see that there was an immediate hush. I then proceeded with the working out of some simultaneous equations on the board, and the rest of the period passed quietly enough. Once or twice I went to my desk without a word and made an ostentatious mark on the paper, but I took care not to give any boy more than two crosses. I want more time to decide what I am going to do in cases of serious disobedience.

I was still at the board when the bell rang and several of the keener boys crowded round to ask me to explain points in the working-out that they had not understood. It was some minutes before I could get to my desk to collect my books, and when I did so I noticed at once that the punishment list had been tampered with. There were six crosses against the name of every boy except that of Sapoulos, who had twelve. No doubt the boy who did this imagined I might not notice or that I might believe I had actually made all these marks myself. He will soon learn, whoever he is, that it is a bad mistake to underrate your enemy.

I am not going to put up with this kind of thing. Tomorrow I shall tell them that they will only have themselves to thank if I go back to the old system of lines, which they appear to dislike so much. And I shall not mince my words.

H. F. E.

The Poet Under Orders

Good King Wenceslas looked out (hummed the Ed.),
On the Feast of Stephen (I sang tremolando).
"Some verse, please, for the Festive Season," he said,
Deep and crisp and even (I finished mancando).

That, on a certain day in summer, was the gist of our conversation.

I should have preferred writing an ode on the European Situation:

O tangled skein of woolly statesmanship . . . not Christmas,
About which my rhyming dictionary is singularly reticent (isthmus!).

Why look like a Dishevelled Worm?
SHOP EARLY, and preserve that perm.

I love the Shops at Yuletide,
I love the great big Stores
Where fathers play at puff-puffs
And mothers in their scores
Chase up the lifts and down the lifts
In search of those delightful Gifts
That all the world abhors.
(Sorry—adores.)

We are now taking you over to Messrs. Carrots
Where you can get anything from plum-puddings to parrots.

O fat white woman whom nobody loves,
Why do you walk through the "Gloves" in shoves
Asking "How much?" and "How much?"

Miss Jenkins, hand me down one of those Painless Bridge sets from the shelf.

Oh, yes, Modom, the game is played *entirely* by oneself.
No "inquests," no discussions, no tiresome feuds or rows;
You can safely trump your "partner's" ace and still remain in Cowes.

Certainly this is Toyland. What about a nice Toy Tank?
Or a Gas-mask? Or a Fighter Plane? How old is little Frank?

Ah, what about this Bomblet, then? Yes, Modom, it explodes—

But harmlessly. The latest toy; we're selling them in loads.

BOOKS? Straight Through Past the Rocking Horse:
(Provided you can get through, of course.)

What was your precise need?

A book for a chronic invalid?

You'll take a look round? Do, indeed!

EUROPE THROUGH THE HOOP

MURDER OF A VICAR

EUROPE IN THE SOUP

QUICKLIME'S ALWAYS QUICKER

EUROPE LOOPS THE LOOP

DEATH IN HIS LORDSHIP'S LIQUOR

EUROPE: THE FINAL SCOOP

SHURRUP! YURRUP

When lovely woman stoops to folly
She purchases CIGARS (My golly!).

Blimey, wot did Gladstone say in '80?
CHOP EARLY, I shouldn't wonder, matey.

Dear, dear, what shall I give your Uncle Gordon?
As you know, darlings, he's an A.R.P. Warden.

Cut out that Christmas racket!

Give him a "KUTEKUT" Non-inflammable, Bomb-proof,

Gas-proof, Scandal-proof Dinner Jacket. (Advt.)

A Novel Gift is a "Zu-Zu" Civilian Respirator.
Stunt Bros. supply them in Hippo, Rhino or Alligator. (Advt.)

Give HUNTING AND SKI-ING BOOTS this Christmas.

Give THIRTY-SHILLING SUITS this Christmas.

Give SAFETY-RAZORS or CHERROOTS this Christmas.

Give GARDEN IMPLEMENTS and ROOTS this Christmas.

Give "THE APPALLING LIFE OF MARIA TOOTS" this Christmas.

Give POPGUNS and PARACHUTES this Christmas.

Give them nothing at all (the brutes!) this Christmas.

Now let us take a little peep without a word of warning
At a typically British family opening parcels Christmas morning.

(O wad some pow'r the giftie gie 'em
To see their Gifts as ither see 'em!)

"My God, it's large enough for a cow!"

"What is this gadget from Auntie Chow?"

"Another calendar. That's forty now."

"Only ten bob, the old frau!"

"It looks better upside-down, anyhow."

"Bah! They cost ninepence in Slough."

(Have you really got this far? You surprise me.)
Whether you live on an island, a peninsula or (ah!)
an isthmus,

I wish you when it comes

A Very Jolly Christmas.

Meanwhile the Co-ordinated and Coagulated Emporiums
And Multiple Millionaires Society, advise me—

Yours not to Reason Why,
Yours but to Barge and Buy.
SHOP EARLY. Shop in July.



"I DIDN'T ASK FOR AN ARGUMENT—I ASKED FOR A HAIR-CUT."

Pages From My Life

A Glass-blower in the Eighties

THE life of a glass-blower in the eighties was a very different thing from what it is now, and I believe it is true to say that it is a very different thing now from what it was in the eighties. I ought to know something about it, after all. My own father was a glass-blower, and I often heard him say that if he could have had his time over again he would have been a Chinese mandarin. He was also in the habit of saying that the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and that the evenings were drawing in. I remember that all these assertions were hotly disputed by my mother. But this is beside the point.

In those days glass-blowers did not work in factories or concentration camps, as they do now. They worked, to coin a phrase, just anywhere. It was a common sight in those days to see glass-blowers blowing glass by the roadsides, or in the parlours of village inns, or in the tops of trees. When I was a child we lived at a village in Doomshire called Double Stopping. My father was the only glass-blower in the village, and it was intended that I, as the eldest of seven children, should follow in his footsteps and blow glass for a living. But Providence thought otherwise.

Unlike many glass-blowers, and in spite of his remarks about Chinese mandarins, Father was really an enthusiast for his trade. Many men would have been content to blow a bottle now and again, or a beer-mug, or an ornament for the parlour mantelpiece. Not so my father. He blew glass in season and out of season. One of my earliest recollections is of my father diving beneath the tea-table one Saturday afternoon and blowing a glass tube, which to my childish fancy seemed as long as the village street. I remember the day when he blew some glass chimney-pots for the Rectory, which the Rector declined to accept, even as a gift. Everything in our own house was glass. There were glass teapots, glass spoons, glass fire-tongs, even a glass coal-hammer. Father wore glass false teeth.

Needless to say this continual glass-blowing was a sore trial to my mother. Quarrels were frequent, and the house

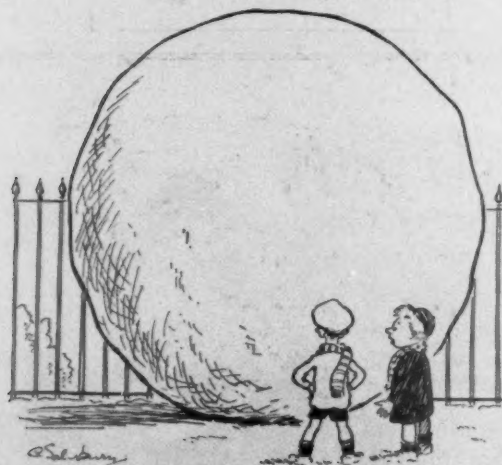
was always littered with broken glass. Privately, I believe my mother always regretted that she had not married a snake-charmer. There had been one in Manchester whom she had known well before she knew Father. Whether things would have been any better if she had married him I do not know. But this is beside the point.

My own attitude to glass-blowing was and is a mixed one. I am second to none in my veneration for the fine old traditions of the craft. I recognise that glass-blowers are seldom found to be drunkards, wife-beaters or perjurers. When a man is blowing glass all day he has little inclination to plot the overthrow of the state or to attempt to undermine the allegiance of His Majesty's forces. But—and it is a potent “but”—there does seem to be a point where Nature herself says, “Thus far and no further.” What shall it profit a man if he blow all the glass bottles in the world and lose his own soul?

By the time I was twelve I had already received some instruction in the art of glass-blowing. I cannot say that I ever showed much aptitude. I remember that my great difficulty at first was to blow the glass in the right direction. Instead of blowing the bottle outwards in the usual way I often found that I had blown the bottle backwards round myself; I had in fact literally bottled myself up; and such was the force of habit that before I knew where I was Father had driven in a cork and put the bottle, with me inside it, on the mantelpiece. On several occasions Mother had hysterics, and it was not until Father had run for the corkscrew that things returned to normal. I have often wondered whether any other young glass-blowers suffered from the same error of technique. I should appreciate letters from readers on this subject, and postal orders, parcels of groceries, etc., will always be welcomed.

I think it is true to say that my heart was not really in the bottles I blew. One thing is quite certain: things went from bad to worse in our home. Father's passion for his art began to take a definitely offensive form. He was no longer content with merely blowing glass. No, he had begun to *blow glass at people*. One evening, when we were all sitting by the fireside, some playing marbles, others idly throwing handfuls of cordite on the cheerful blaze, Father suddenly started up and deliberately blew a large glass plate, embossed with a view of the Bay of Naples, straight into Mother's face. Then, as though struck with the enormity of what he had done, he dashed upstairs and we heard him blowing sherry-glasses out of the bedroom window, one after the other. Next morning, with her face bandaged, Mother left home, taking my six brothers and sisters with her. She did not take me. I think that as an apprentice glass-blower she looked upon me as already lost. Anyhow, she never spoke to Father again.

After that I resolved that whatever Father might say I would never become a glass-blower. I had seen enough. I decided that at the first opportunity I would leave Double Stopping and seek my fortune in London. The end was not far off. A few weeks later I rose one morning to find my father, with a mad gleam in his eyes, blowing an enormous glass bell (in shape like those which confine railway refreshment-room sandwiches) right over the house. There was not a moment to lose, if I did not wish to be a madman's prisoner. I packed my few possessions and without looking back I ran from the ill-fated house, pursued by a shower of small glass buttons. From that day to this I have never been able to see a glass-blower without a start of horror.



"WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING FURTHER UNTIL WE GET SOME MORE SNOW."

Stern Measures for the Unfit

"If you haven't taken much exercise for some months, you are like a new car. You want running in."—*Daily Mirror*.

More Clerihews



"No," said Charles Peace,
"I can hardly blame the police.
They're a nuisance, it is true,
But I see their point of view."



In later life Methuselah
Became a hopeless fozzler.
After he was 765
He practically never hit a decent drive.

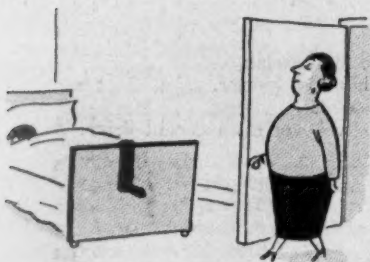


The one thing Cleopatra
Never could abide was a flatterer.
When Antony compared her to Thâïs
She knocked him right off the dâis.



Sir Herbert Beerbohm Tree
Would never accept any fee
For singing *The Wearing of the Green*,
Accompanying himself on the tambourine. E. C. B.

Dressiness on the Farm



I SUPPOSE the fact of the matter is (said Mr. Harrison) women take dress more to heart than a man does. It don't worry a man to be seen around with a collar-stud where his tie ought to be, nor he don't get agitated if so be his trousers ain't all there. But a woman gets miserable and depressed if she's so much as got a knot in her shoelace. It's the feminine in 'em, that's what it is, and there ain't a thing you can do about it—you just have to let it rip.

I reckon that's what made my missus take on so about the scarecrow on sentry-go out in Pedlar's Pitch, the field where I'd got my wheat sown.

"Walter," she says, "it's a disgrace."

"What's a disgrace?" I says.

"Why, the scandalous state of that scarecrow's clobber," she says. "Anybody can see it's your own cast-off clothing it's wearing, and they'll all be nudging one another and agreeing it shows what sort of a wife I am to let my husband's clothes get into such a condition."

Well, I always did believe in humouring a woman. They get their own way in the end, so if you give in to 'em graceful at the start it makes things pleasanter for you and saves a deal of time into the bargain. So I went up into the attic and routed out an old suit I'd had a matter of twenty years and a hat the missus left off wearing about the same time, and I took and dressed up the dudman in this rig-out. It warn't particular smart, but I reckoned it was good enough for a crow. A crow ain't got no call to be fussy about the clothes a dudman wears.

Well, the effect was good—I ain't denying that. It convinced the crows too. Crows ain't got the intellect to set down to reasoning out that no respectable woman is going to wear a man's suit with her best hat, nor yet that a

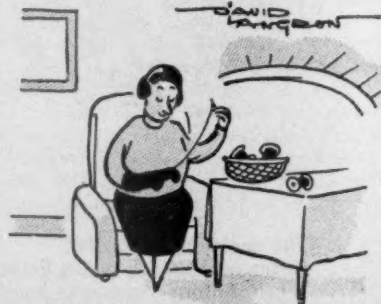
man's got more self-esteem than to fool around in a velvet hat with about two-and-a-half pounds of mixed fruit on it. They just took in the whole effect without pulling it to pieces, and it registered. I thought the thing was settled.

But no. Old Teakle, farming at Nine Oaks down the road, he went by one afternoon and he seen my scarecrow. Wouldn't have mattered, but he had Mrs. Teakle with him. I reckon she lectured him all the way home, and the next morning the dudman in old Teakle's patch of field-peas come out in the most surprising get-up. A lady's purple costume with leg-of-mutton sleeves and a bowler-hat that warn't dented on more than one side neither. I hoped and prayed that the missus wouldn't see it; but she did of course. "Not going to be beat by Mr. Teakle, are we?" she says.

"We're not scaring Teakle, we're scaring crows," I tells her.

"I'll go up to the attic and find you some more stuff," she says, not listening to me.

Well, my dudman changed his togs that afternoon for a 1925 grey suit and a soft hat that somehow got left behind by a party that went picnicking in a field along with my old Tamworth boar. I don't mind saying it give an air to that field of mine. Teakle was mad with jealousy when he seen it. He went straight home and dressed out his scarecrow in the most ridiculous way—riding-breeches, raincoat and straw-hat. Honest, I felt downright sorry for that dudman. It was lowering him to the level of a pantomime comic. I polished up my scarecrow with a pair of spectacles and the gloves I buried my poor old father in. That put Teakle in the shade all right. He withdrew the whole wardrobe three days after that and tricked out that unfortunate dudman in pyjamas. Pyjamas, if you



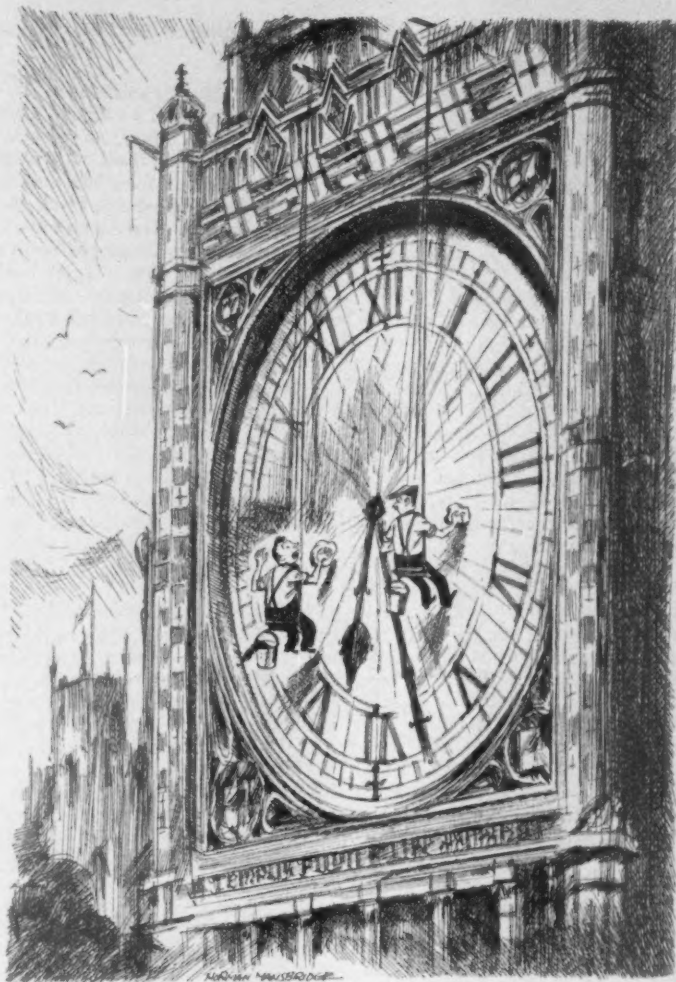
please, in the middle of a field in the broad daylight! My missus held it was fair indelicate. Same time they certainly made a body look at the dudman. The more I saw mine the shabbier he seemed. So I took and overhauled him—give him a pair of white flannel bags, a blazer and a panama.

"That'll give Teakle something to worry over," I says.

It done it too. It took Teakle best part of a week to get his answer in, and it's my belief he waited for market-day and went to the old-clo' shop. Anyhow, he come flaunting out with a red-and-green dressing-gown over his pyjamas. The dudman, I mean of course. I don't suppose old Teakle ever wore a dressing-gown in his life. That dressing-gown warn't only red-and-green. They was just the colours that hit you in the eye first. There was about every colour in the paint-box on it, and more when the sun was setting. The missus was so annoyed she took and washed the white flannels off of our dudman and ironed em' out with a lovely crease; and I do believe she'd have dyed the blazer if so be she'd had any dye handy.

Teakle give his chap a towel to hang over his peastick arm the next morning. That was swank, if anything was, but I warn't going to let it pass, and I fitted mine out with an old cricket-bat with a sprung splice. Teakle went on to add a sponge-bag. I took and pipe-clayed my old cricketing-pads and stuck them round my chap's legs. He was a beautiful sight, as artistic a scarecrow as ever you see. Even the crows couldn't keep away from him; they used to come sidling up to get a peek at him.

Teakle didn't do anything for another week, so I judged he was thinking up something special. Well, thinks I, he darned if I'm going to be done by old Teakle! I'll come out with something special too. I hunted all through that attic, but there warn't nothing there. And then I found something good—my wedding-suit, striped trousers, frock-coat, lavender waistcoat, top-hat and all. It had come to me in the way of business, a chap being sold up and me buying Lot 107 to get the lawn-mower and not realising they'd lumped Lot 108 in with it to save time. Well, it seemed a pity to waste it, so I got married, and now I reckoned that was the end of its usefulness. I judged I wouldn't want it no more, my missus being six years younger than me and twice as lively. So I says to myself the dudman should have it. I took the lantern that night and dressed him up, and he was good enough for one of them society papers. I was up first thing in the morning to see how he looked in



"TIME'S GONE EXTRA QUICK TO-DAY."

daylight, and, honest, he made that wheatfield seem just like Sunday afternoon. I never see a more fashionable wheatfield in my life. And crows? There warn't a crow in sight. They was just abashed by that elegant figure standing there all striped trousers and frock-coat with a shiny topper over its turnip head.

"Well," I thinks, "this'll give old Teakle something to get on with." And I walks along to look at his dudman.

Damme if he hadn't done the same as me! There his chap was leaning among the peas like a lord, for all the world like he was just going to unveil a statue. I didn't say a word. I just sneaked home, and I was that humiliated I could hardly eat a mouthful of breakfast. And old Teakle told me it

was just the same with him when he see my chap.

Yes, we shook hands on the thing and agreed to stop. We both recognised we couldn't go no higher. We'd made gentlemen of our dudmen. They was forty times better dressed than we was, and we couldn't do no more for 'em. There they stayed for a solid fortnight, just oozing respectability and making us almost ashamed to go into our own fields in our old clothes. Then one morning we got up to find our two dudmen the dirtiest, raggedest, most disreputable dudmen in the whole county. And we heard later that a couple of tramps hadn't been able to get into the union four miles down the road the night before on account of them looking too prosperous.

Mr. Mafferty Makes His Maiden

"MR. SPEAKER, Sir," said Mr. Mafferty, rising on the motion to adjourn for Christmas, "I rise with grovelling deference an' chronic apprehension to address this honourable House for the first time, an' I ask for the customary indulgence of honourable Members for anny poor wretch is in this hard position.

"Sure, Sir, I never thought I'd find meself in this place, standin' on me two feet conversin' with the faithful Commons, an' now I do it's little I have to say, I'm thinkin'. But Christmas is comin', it's the last day of term, there's few Members present, an' I thought I'd get me maiden oration behind me quickly, the way the fear of it would not be lyin' on me stomach an' spoilin' me sleep an' satisfaction in the digestive season.

"Well, Mr. Speaker, maybe you'd wish to hear about me by-election an' the classic victory we had there. Sure, I bring a message an' a mandate from the people of South Simmertown, but I'll not pretend I can tell you what it is. All by-elections is cheatin', Mr. Speaker, an' proves everythin' an' nothin'. 'Twas a trumpetin' victory for both sides we had at South Simmertown, an' everyone is beautifully satisfied. The Government's totterin', and the Government's the darlin' of the nation still; the people's mind is blazin' about Milk, an' the people's mind is blazin' about Mussolini, an' there's a quiet satisfaction in the people's mind concernin' both. Sure, I stood as an Independent Tory Revolutionary; I went for the Fluid Vote an' I got it. There's no candidate does not go after the Fluid Vote: but it's hard things they say, the most of 'em, concernin' the Fluid Voters behind their backs. There's no gratitude nor sense in that. If it's the Fluid Voters that wins elections haven't they a right to be represented in Parliament? Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may call me the Fluid Member. Sure, the way things is goin' I see the makin' of a Fluid Party; and maybe in the time to come we'll work up to a Fluid Government with a Fluid Prime Minister an' all. Fluidity's a fine political philosophy, for it means a man will not be ashamed to change his mind when everythin' goes to prove he was wrong; an' that's more than you can say for manny.

"An' now, Sir, maybe the House would wish to hear a small piece concernin' the technique of me election.

First, about the organisation. Sir, I had no organisation at all, no Committee, no Chairman, no meetin's neither, no speeches at all, no posters, nor loud-speakers, nor leaflets, nothin'. Sure, there's no sense left in all that apparatus to-day. There's no sense in annythin' distracts the people from the football pools, for that will get black marks for the candidate; an' if it don't distract them from the football pools it's a waste of money entirely.

"An' there's no sense in the short an' snuffy election addresses concernin' economic rehabilitation an' the co-ordination of this an' that, for no man nowadays will read the like of that, exceptin' in the bilious weeklies. The people is particular about their readin'-matter to-day, an' Mr. Gladstone himself couldn't shift 'em from the football pools.

"So what did I do then to win the hearts of the people? I wrote them a nice long lovin' election address in the style of the sob-mongers in the favourite Sunday papers. I told them I had a mother, an' a little ugly dog as well; I told them I was fond of fretwork an' bicyclin'; I told them the tricks I had for winnin' in the football pools, an' I gave 'em a few small fancies for the pools that week. Sure, I let fall a sigh

or two concernin' the state of Europe an' the condition of the people. It's not meself, I said, would be throwin' thoughtless stones at anyone concernin' the same, but, after all, I said, it's the big stiff Parties, with their permanent brain-waves, has brought us where we are, an' maybe it would do no harm to try a Fluid Member with no fixed notions at all. An' anyway, I said, I had eleven results out of twelve in the big pool recently, an' that was more than the Prime Minister could say.

"An' there was another thing, Mr. Speaker—no, there was two. For one, I turned up at the last minute only: the longer the electors know you the more they know about you. An' for two, I never went near South Simmertown before the countin' of the votes, for I had to lie on me sick-bed and fight the battle from there. An' maybe others would do as well if they were ill. After me movin' election address had melted the electors, after they'd felt the surge an' beauty of me prose style, there's none would not be disappointed to see me ordinary face or hear me shy replies to questions about the Polish Corridor or the price of fertilizers.

"Well, there it is, Mr. Speaker, an' here I am, in good time to adjourn for Christmas. I've reason to believe there's no Parliamentary celebration of the season, an' that's a pity. I'd like to see a little holly in the lobbies, an' a great cloud of mistletoe in the Central Hall, where the Members do be interviewin' their darlin' constituents. Where's the crackers, Mr. Speaker? Where's the Christmas-tree? I'd like to see yourself, Sir, cuttin' down the presents, grand cigars for the Clerks-at-the-Table, an' enormous turkeys for the Messengers an' policemen, an' puddin's an' prizes for the faithful servants of the House. I'd like to see the Cabinet pullin' crackers across the Table with the Leaders of the Opposition. Sure, there's no other buildin' in the town this day bears no sign at all of seekin' peace an' goodwill, an' what will they say on the Continent of Europe if Madame Tabouis should hear the like of that?

"I beg to move, Sir, that His Majesty's Government do give a Christmas party before the House adjourns. What's more, Mr. Speaker—"

Mr. Speaker. Order, order. I am loath to check the honourable Member on the first occasion on which he addresses the House, but a private Member must not propose a charge upon the public revenue.

Mr. Mafferty. I was thinkin', Sir, of the Consolidated Fund, though God



A. R. P. DEPT.

"I FEEL SURE WE COULD DRIVE A FIRE-ENGINE."



"AND NOW IN RETURN WE WANT YOU TO PROMISE TO BRING ALL YOUR FAMILY TO SPEND THE DAY WITH US ON SATURDAY WEEK."

knows what the Consolidated Fund may be.

Mr. Speaker. That would require a Financial Resolution.

Mr. Mafferty. Very well, Sir. Sure, 'tis the time for resolutions. I'll move it meself—

Mr. Speaker. By the Standing Orders, only a member of the Government may move a Financial Resolution.

Mr. Mafferty. An' why would the Government not do that, Sir?

Mr. Speaker. I cannot answer for the Government.

Mr. Mafferty. Well, Sir, if it's out of order, I'll forget the party. But I tell you what, Sir, there's too little of the Christmas spirit in the Standin' Orders, an' in the Constitution likewise. 'Tis not enough, Sir, for the British race to be bubblin' over with goodwill an' neighbourly warmth for a few weeks only at the endin' of the year. They should be warm an' bubblin' from first

to last, the whole year round, the way I am meself. I beg to move, Sir, that the Christmas spirit be incorporated in the British Constitution—

Mr. Speaker. Order, order. I am afraid that the honourable Member's proposal would involve legislation.

Mr. Mafferty. Maybe, Sir. 'Twill be a grand addition to the Statute Book. An Act to Incorporate the Christmas Spirit in the British Constitution. 'Twill delight the world.

Mr. Speaker. Matters involving legislation cannot be debated on a motion for the adjournment of the House.

Mr. Mafferty. Ah, Sir, 'tis a hard life, is it not? But be aisy, Mr. Speaker, I'll say no more. Ladies an' gentlemen, a Happy Christmas to you. An' may the blessed saints be about your bed an' about your board from this time till the latter end! God save the King. (*Hear, hear.*) A. P. H.

We Simple People

WE simple people—
Smile at us if you like—
Are
Really most extraordinary,
Because we are not nearly
So afraid of
The news of an army corps massing
On frontiers, of
Fleets mobilising, of
Searchlights sweeping the night skies,
Of governments d  marching,
Even of ultimatums; we
Can take all that
And more. What
Makes us look quickly at one
Another anxiously is
The cheerful voice
Assuring us
"These are merely
Routine measures."



"MUMMY, WHY DO WE PRAY FOR THE FIRST COURSE AND RING FOR THE SECOND?"

Hunt Ball

At the Hunt Ball
In the Town Hall
The usual throng
Shuffles along.
The local maidens elbow past
So thick if not so fast;
From East and West and North and
South
They come discussing Foot and Mouth
And malformations of the hocks
Freely in their long frocks
From which small fragments cut
adrift
What time the waltz is swift.
Meanwhile the tails,
Last stronghold of the males
(I think),
Here lose their message if they are not
pink.
Pink is the password, be it worn
By thrusters over wire and thorn
Or those who wait
To be let through the gate.
Black is the badge of urban cads
Who come in shoulder-pads.
In their small herds
They know the tunes and sing the words,

Unconscious that all noises are con-
cealed
Save bellows from the hunting-field.
They do the Truck
And all that sort of muck
And frequently collide
Broadside
With a number
Of the County disdaining to do the
Rumba.

At the Hunt Ball,
While nearly all
The couples spar
For a good bar
Of music to begin upon, the band
Throws in its hand,
And one must share
The one remaining chair
And sit completely out
With nothing left to talk about
Except how hot
One's shirt has somehow got,
While some will add how wet
It's also apt to get.
Then men who are not in the mood
For food

Can now succumb
To Mum,
Leaving poor partners in the throes
Of powdering the nose,
Preening the face
And filling in each programme
space
With C. L. Oakroom and the names
Of absent flames;
Till of a sudden a loud roar
Draws every eye towards the floor,
Where in a deep
And writhing heap
The County, two years late
Now that it's out of date
And has died,
Is consenting to do the Palais Glide.

F.H.B.

"About 160 guests, including the Prime Minister (Mr. Chamberlain), members of the Cabinet and fifteen Ambassadors, attended a banquet in Buckingham Palace to-night to King Carol of Rumania and the Crown Prince Michael. . . . Dinner was served on a gold plate."—*South African Paper*.



— — AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

Impressions of Parliament

Synopsis of the Week

Monday, December 12th.—Commons: Cancer Bill given Second Reading.

Tuesday, December 13th.—Lords: Debate on Merchant Service.



LORD LLOYD (sings):

"WE'VE NOT THE SHIPS,
"WE'VE NOT THE MEN;
"GIVE US SOME MONEY, DO!"

Commons: Reorganisation of Offices (Scotland) Bill given Second Reading. Debate on Licensing of Commercial Road Vehicles.

Wednesday, December 14th.—Lords: Debate on Refugees.

Commons: Debates on Land Nationalisation and Accidents to Boys in Mines.

Monday, December 12th.—This afternoon Mr. CHAMBERLAIN answered a large number of questions on foreign affairs. He told the House that no treaty obliged this country to go to the help of France if she were attacked by Italy, and that no request had been received from Germany for the return of her former colonies. He refused to give any assurances beforehand about his visit to Rome, but said that any agreement which might be entered into would be submitted to the House for discussion. He had read about the reference in the German Press to Lord BALDWIN as a "guttersnipe"; it had appeared in a paper of no particular importance, whose reputation would suffer accordingly. Lord BALDWIN's would not. Our representative in Berlin had been told to join with the French Ambassador in reminding the

German Government that as signatories of the Memel Convention we hoped that the Statute of Memel would be respected after the current elections.

Mr. CHAMBERLAIN also announced the names of the six business-men who have agreed to form an advisory panel to stimulate the production of arms—Mr. J. S. ADDISON, Sir GEORGE BEHARRELL, Mr. PETER BENNETT, Mr. J. O. M. CLARK, Sir GEOFFREY CLARKE and Mr. FRANCIS D'ARCY COOPER. They were to have the right of direct access to him.

The Government's Cancer Bill was welcomed on all sides as a step in the right direction, though it was roundly criticised as being little more than a Radium Bill and for neglecting research.

In the last forty years the annual death-rate from cancer has nearly doubled. Yet, as Mr. ELLIOT informed the House, it was not a disease of civilisation. He was hopeful that in time concerted measures would stamp it out, as had happened to such scourges as malaria and cholera, which had once ravaged this country. Modern treatment by radium and X-rays was making great progress. The Bill aimed at bringing it within the reach of everyone by extending the existing machinery through the voluntary hospitals; and also at fighting the bogey of incurability, which so often prevented sufferers from consulting a doctor until it was too late. On the financial side local authorities were to be helped by the Exchequer (an average contribution of fifty per cent.), and up to half-a-million pounds was to be lent by the Government to the National Radium Trust for buying more radium. A further clause in the Bill, which met with general approval, prohibited advertisements of quack cures.

M. HERBERT MORRISON only quarrelled with the equity of the financial provisions as between local authorities, but Sir ERNEST GRAHAM-LITTLE, as a



OUR BACK BENCH WHO'S WHO

A lawyer, Mr. H. G. STRAUSS
Was sent by Norwich to the House.

specialist, assured the MINISTER that radium was a method of treatment which was receding. Another doctor, Sir FRANCIS FREMANTLE, took a more favourable view of the Bill. He asked that G.P.'s should be consulted about future plans.

Tuesday, December 13th.—Lord LLOYD, concerned with the problems of imperial defence, declared in the



A SEASONABLE GIFT

[The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER announced that the Government would contribute up to £100,000 towards the acquisition of the Westminster House site for preservation as an open space.]

Lords this afternoon that, in spite of assurances from the Cabinet that in men and ships we were equal to any emergency, the crisis of the autumn had shown the mercantile marine unfit to bear the burden of war. SIR THOMAS INSKIP's complacency on the subject conflicted directly with the view taken by the Chamber of Shipping. In the last twenty years the number of our fishermen had almost halved, while the shipbuilding yards had lost a quarter of their skilled men. For our future security the Government were depending on an insecure supply of foreign ships.

With these statements Lord STRARBOLGI, an old salt, agreed, coupling them particularly with British humiliation at the hands of General FRANCO. Lord ESSENDON, an owner and also Chairman of the Shipping Committee appointed by the Government (which is about to report), described how subsidised competition and a general falling-off in international trade had damaged British shipping since the War. He found it deplorable that vessels to the tune of seven million pounds should be going up for this



"THERE IS A SHORT CUT THROUGH THE JUNGLE, SIR, BUT I CAN'T RECOMMEND IT."

country in foreign yards, and he thought it vital that whatever suggestions his Committee put forward should be considered without delay.

In his reply Lord RUNCIMAN described Lord LLOYD as gloomy, but was unable to paint much brighter a picture himself. He assured the House that the solid support for which Lord ESSENDON had asked would not be withheld.

The Commons spent a duller day than it had expected. Captain RAMSAY was given leave to bring in his Bill to oblige shareholders in news-agencies, newspapers and magazines to disclose their identity. In spite of being a "Franco" Tory he was warmly supported by the Labour Party.

A Second Reading was given to the Government's Bill to give Scotland more of her own administration, and on the MINISTER OF TRANSPORT promising to review his arrangements at the end of two years, a breeze which blew up in the evening over the increased cost of licensing commercial road vehicles died gently away.

At a late hour Mr. QUIBELL pulled out of his waistcoat-pocket a potato weighing a pound-and-a-quarter, and

protested that such an earnest of Nature's generosity should not be frowned on for commercial purposes by the Ministry. But Mr. MORRISON continued to frown.

Wednesday, December 14th.—Lord MARLEY's motion, urging the Government to give more direct aid to refugees whose problem was too big for the voluntary organisations to handle successfully, brought from the PRIMATE the view that what was most pressing was to find ultimate destinations for them, and from Lord PLYMOUTH, for the Government, the promise of help once the Jewish bodies had submitted their settlement schemes. He mentioned that the area available in British Guiana had proved to be four times bigger than the P.M. had stated, and emphasised the absurdity of the German claim that the callous dumping of surplus population on other countries should be regarded as a purely internal problem.

In the Commons Mr. CHAMBERLAIN told Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON and others that the Italian promise to maintain the status quo in the Mediterranean certainly applied to Tunis. But he found it impossible to

contemplate the possibility of an Italian attack on France.

Mr. MALCOLM MACDONALD explained that in view of the imminence of the Palestine Conference the Government could not allow the immediate emigration of ten thousand young German Jews to homes which had been found for them in Palestine; but if it was necessary for them to leave Germany at once, then they could come here for the time being.

Two Private Members' debates, initiated by Mr. JOHNSTON and Commander FLETCHER, dealt with land nationalisation and the safety of boys in coal-mines. The first was rather broken up by Mr. RAIKES, who read part of a speech by the Chairman of the Labour Party Executive on compensation (which Mr. JOHNSTON had suggested on the basis of Schedule A), pointing out that even if compensation had to be paid it could always be recovered through super-tax.

There was general agreement that the position of boy-miners needed revision, but Captain CROOKSHANK announced that the Royal Commission on Safety in Coal-mines would report in a few days.

The Penny Black

DANCING round the maypole—to select an example at random—looks to the lay onlooker as peaceable an occupation as you could want to find. All you have to do is to change your direction from clockwise to anticlockwise whenever those about you do the same, and avoid getting your ribbons tangled up with those of your neighbours. At least, that is how it looks to the uninstructed; and yet I dare say that if you only penetrate a little beneath the surface you will find that maypole-dancing is in actual fact a hotbed of intrigue and esoteric dispute.

Should the pole be painted in coloured stripes like the version used by barbers? Ought the ribbons to be fixed solid at the top or mounted on a swivelling thingumebob? Is it correct to dance "Mr. Beveridge's Maggot" in white flannel trousers? These and a host of similar questions disturb (I have no doubt) the outwardly placid lives of maypole-dancing enthusiasts.

I am inspired—if that is the word—to this thought by a poster which I saw exhibited the other day not a thousand miles from Piccadilly Circus. It was the display-bill of a philatelic journal, and it said truculently, "Hands off the Penny Black!"

Now stamp-collectors are in general as inoffensive a class as you can well imagine; and yet here they are, getting all heated and political over this vexed question of the Penny Black. What can be the nature of this dispute? What high philatelic principle is involved? (I could have told you if I had bought the journal, but I didn't; so speculation will have to be rife.)

Let us first correlate our knowledge about Penny Blacks. Penny Blacks are of course black, but they are not by any means a mere penny in value. Actually their worth fluctuates widely, and I feel it would be advantageous if it could be quoted alongside the Stock Exchange prices in the daily Press. For example, a few weeks ago I bought a Penny Black for a small nephew. The stamp salesman had a sheet covered with them. He selected one, picked it off the sheet with a pair of forceps and looked at it with a magnifying-glass.

"That one is three-and-six, Sir," he observed.

I suggested that he might try one a little further down, and he took another one off.

"That one is five shillings," he told me. "The postmark isn't near so

heavy, and you'll see this first one is a little bit discoloured at the back."

"Does that matter?" I asked.

"Surely that's the side where the gum is, and you wouldn't see it anyway."

Something about the way I said it revealed to the man that I was no philatelist. He put the first two stamps back on the sheet and took off a third. "That's a rather better one," he said casually, "but I'll let you have that one for three-and-six if you like. As you will see . . ."

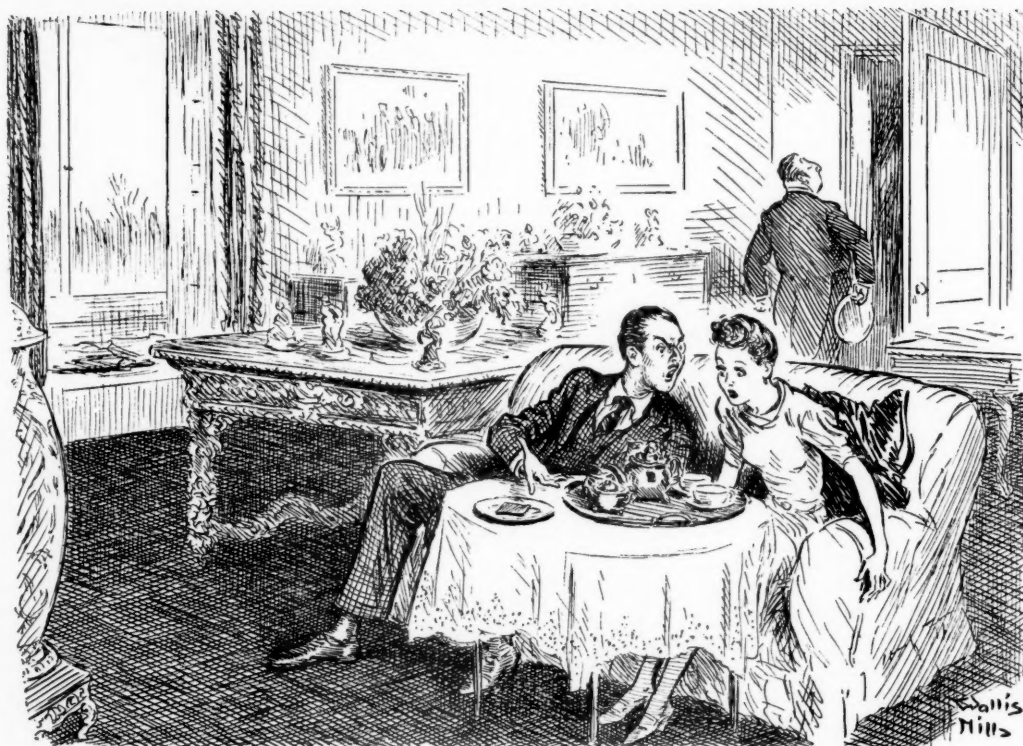
He pointed out lots of things that in

point of fact I did not see. Ultimately of course I bought the stamp and conveyed it with some satisfaction to my nephew. He, being a true philatelist, could hardly wait until he had taken it round to the nearest stamp-shop to be valued. Possibly he thought that Penny Blacks might have gone up since I bought that one to about ten shillings or so. However, the stamp-dealer quoted a doubtful one-and-six.

Now, with a little guidance from the Press I could have got my stamp when the market value was depressed on



"HANG UP YOUR STOCKINGS, LADS! MAYBE YOU'LL GET 'EM FULL O' FISH."



"WHAT HAVE WE DONE NOW?"

account of the European situation—say about ninepence—and waited until something in the nature of a boom arose before I gave it to little Ronald. Then everyone would have been better pleased.

One very remarkable thing about Penny Blacks is the presence of two little ciphers in the bottom corners. There is a letter in each corner, and it seems to have been left largely to the discretion of the purchaser what the letters were. In spite of the late Queen's portrait that adorned the middle the letters were never, as far as I can see, V R; nor were they P B (for Penny Black) or R H (for Rowland Hill), or indeed anything that makes sense at all. I can only suppose that in the early days of the penny post some contemporary Tryon thought he could stimulate the sale of stamps by providing them with customer's initials worked into the design.

We are still, however, as far as ever from a solution to the "Hands Off!" problem. Who is playing a dirty game with Penny Blacks? And what is the

game? Has some ruthless Surrealist been buying up the stamps and adding a moustache and beard in Indian ink to the features of Queen Victoria? Or is there a sinister international syndicate trying to undercut the market with cheap Japanese-made imitations? Or perhaps there is a moral principle involved—possibly there is some new work about in which a base attempt is made to "de-bunk" the stamps and prove that they were never worth more than three farthings, and that the picture on them is not that of Queen Victoria but of a girl called Gertie Babington, who used to be seen around a lot with Lord Melbourne. You never know.

At any rate I feel instinctively that the plea for "Hands Off the Penny Black!" is a just one and will not fall on deaf ears in this country. I do not think the freedom-loving British nation can resist such a headline as that any more than they could resist "Clean Up Barbola-work" or "Ogilvie Over Morris Dancing." After all, there are still some traditions worth saving.

Letters from a Gunner

VIII.

MY DEAR MOTHER,—What is Shalloon Braid? My interest in this elusive fabric arises from an absence of information concerning it throughout the whole battery. The Gunnery Handbook merely states rather coldly that the sticks of cordite in the shell are tied with Shalloon Braid or Silk; the lecturer amplified this by explaining that the reason these interesting materials are used in lieu of ordinary string (or red tape?) is that on burning they leave no ash. (The purpose of this I find hard to follow. On the explosion of a shell who is concerned with the amount of ash left? Surely not the target. He is presumably concerned to see how much of his plane and himself are left; a slight deposit of ash would probably leave him unmoved. Nor can it interest us, for an emission of ash some miles up in the sky is hardly material, nor are the civilian

population, already incensed no doubt by the falling fragments of shell, likely to be driven finally out of control by a trifling dustiness in the atmosphere. Unless the War Office would regard it as adding insult to injury—?) But the central problem remains. What is Shalloon Braid. Am I to be driven to an intensive study of the more intimate type of Woman's Weekly, or can you answer this?

All this arises out of a promotion course on which I am at present engaged. It is all most interesting, but one of the most important things I have learnt is the exact use of the lanyard.

When I first joined the battery and was given a uniform I was told that it was necessary to buy a lanyard. This is a handsome piece of white cord with a large loop at one end and a small loop at the other. It is worn wrapped round the right shoulder-joint, the end with the small loop being carried from there into the right breast-pocket. Knowledgeable people instructed me how to twist it properly, how to get it to stay put (it had a deplorable tendency to slip), and how to carry it across to the appropriate pocket in a smart and soldierlike way. But no one told me what it was for. I was a little puzzled, for while it undoubtedly added to the smartness of the appearance its peculiar construction rather limited its conceivable uses. For instance, it could not be intended for tying parcels—if so, why the loops? It was not strong enough to secure one of the mythical horses which, as Dismounted Cavalry, we must always take into our calculations, nor could I see any use for it in camp life. It was too long to tie the lanterns to the tent-pole, quite useless for securing one's boots to one's person as a precaution against theft, unnecessary as a fastening to the kit bag as that was provided with a stout and useful cord. Gradually my imagination exhausted itself and I came to the conclusion that some earlier White Knight of the Army had invented it for securing mousetraps or catching lobsters, and tradition had preserved it intact.

But I was wrong. It is used for firing the gun.

Not regularly. The gun is normally fired by operating the firing-handle, which in turn operates the firing-rod, which strikes the intermediate firing-lever, which operates the firing-lever, which releases the trigger-sear No. 2 and—well, anyhow, in the end a minute lump of metal hits the shell and the whole jolly outfit goes off with a devil of a bang. But, as you can imagine, it is conceivable that in this long chain of The-House-that-Jack-Built conse-

quencessomething might stick and then the gun-number concerned will secure his lanyard to some portion of the trigger-sear and, shutting his eyes tight, will give it a short jerk. And if he hasn't bought a lanyard in the canteen then he is in a fix.

But, naturally enough, our course is not confined to useful tips of this kind. We have to take the whole of the breech and firing mechanism to pieces and put it together again. It is a stimulating sight to see Sergeant Filligree, who in private life assists in controlling the destinies of a Bond Street art dealer, holding an irregularly shaped piece of metal and repeating

over and over again, "Lever Actuating Catch Retaining Breech Screw Closed" (for that is what it is called).

We are now looking forward to our examination. In my head revolve vertical deflections, dihedrals, tangent elevations, fuse time differences, cams, pinions, thrust-arms, travelling stay-wires and countless other flora and fauna. My only regret is. Boy Killey is not on the course. I can imagine him saying, "Blimey, if I learn all this they'll pass me straight out into the Balloon Barrage as part of the equipment." Anyhow, that is how I feel.

Your loving Son,

HAROLD.



"GOOD KING WHAT'S-'IS-NAME LOOKED OUT, DOING THE LAMBETH WALK. OI!"

At the Play

"JOHN BULL'S OTHER ISLAND" (Q)

A FEW years ago, when I was driving across Ireland towards the west, I came to a village where the road forked and there was no signboard to help me. I pulled up in the middle of the village and shouted at a group of men who were leaning against a bridge and spitting thoughtfully into a little river. One of them, a fine old man with a white beard and eyes the colour of cornflowers, came over to me. "Is it right or left for Mayo?" I asked. "Ah!" he cried, "if it's Mayo ye're wanting"—and began a geographical oration which held me spellbound by the clock for five minutes. There was no stopping him, and I had no wish to stop him, for he was a great artist with words. When at last his breath ran down I begged him to tell me which side of the fork to take, and reluctantly he did so.

On my way back a few weeks later the same men were in the same place engaged in the same way, so I pulled up and asked if I was right for Dublin. The same old man came over and launched into the same spate of rhetoric very faintly adapted for use in the other direction.

He must have spent a lifetime improving on the pitfalls of a road so simple as to be almost foolproof, for the mystification of terrified tourists; and now, whenever the Irish character crops up, I think of him immediately. And not with disrespect. For in an age when public eloquence and private conversation are dying, when men are so hag-ridden by time that they will risk their necks to lop an hour off a day's journey, when a mechanised efficiency has been parrot-cried into the sacred goal of man, is there not much to be said for the sober cultivation of wordy indolence?

As perhaps the tone of the last paragraph will show, I have been re-reading Mr. SHAW. I have been combing this play and its preface in an honest attempt to discover what he thinks of his countrymen, of whom I am one, and I am none the wiser. He seems quite unable to decide whether they are spineless mooning imbeciles or iron-jawed gimlet-eyed go-getters. In the preface he speaks of the Irishman as "fact-facing" and clear-minded (comparing him to that sentimental easily-hum-

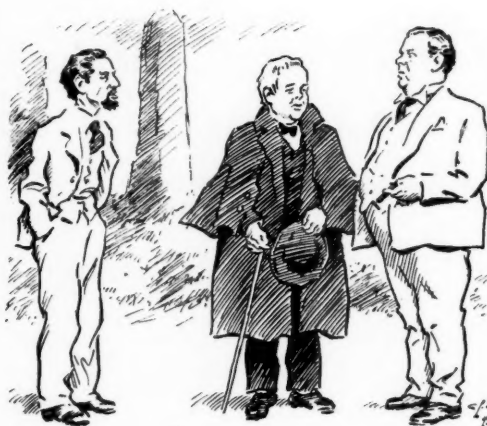
bugged ass, the Englishman), and in the play he pictures him as an extraordinarily hard-working peasant; yet he makes the only cold-bloodedly intelligent Irishman in the play describe how the Irish climate rapidly corrodes



AN OVERHEAD PROPOSAL

Nora Reilly . . . MISS VERA COOK
Broadbent . . . MR. RAYMOND LOVELL

the mind by driving it to an imaginative dreaming which "never convinces him, never satisfies him, but makes him that he can't face reality nor deal with it nor handle it nor conquer it."



THREE MEN AND A VOTE

Larry Doyle . . . MR. GERARD TYRRELL
Peter Keegan . . . MR. ESMÉ PERCY
Broadbent . . . MR. RAYMOND LOVELL

Before the preface strays into a long account of a pigeon-shooting scandal of British misrule in the East (it doesn't read too comfortably, but then what a dazzling prosecutor Mr. SHAW can be!), out of which he seeks to condemn the conduct of every corner of the British Empire, it is a demand for Home Rule, based, it would seem, on a sudden and convenient disregard for the over-riding factor of the Irish climate.

The play goes out of its way to show how unfitted the Irish are for freedom, and in a programme-note Mr. SHAW, looking back over what has happened since it was first written in 1904, admits that the opening chapters in actual Irish independence have been somewhat chequered for a fact-facing people. But his claim that his characters would be much the same to-day, only uttering different catch-words, seems to stand on this production of the play, which is in many respects admirable.

Broadbent, whom Mr. RAYMOND LOVELL fills out with the most unselfish fidelity, is still to be found, composed of two absolutely separate cells, one containing pomposity, sentimentality and a burning desire to unshackle the lesser breeds, the other a shrewd business sense, unhampered by too strict a regard for either morals or aesthetics. As the blundering Englishman entertaining the native Irish with bovine exhibitionism Broadbent can be run to ground most easily nowadays in fishing hotels. Larry, whose terribly difficult explosions of resentment against the hopelessness of his home Mr. GERARD

TYRRELL handles most commendably, is a type which used to constitute Ireland's chief export to America until American economics died under the strain. As Peter Keegan, the ex-priest who, half-poet and half-saint, holds the balance between the opposing arguments of the play and speaks for the eternal Ireland, Mr. ESMÉ PERCY gives some splendid passages their full meed of rhythm. Miss MAIRE O'NEILL is the most credible member of the village of Roscullen, and Miss VERA COOK's Nora is far too attractive (and too sensible) to have waited eighteen years for a faithless young scallywag.

The play dates, but so does history; and the play has the advantage of having been written by Mr. SHAW. ERIC.

"TWELFTH NIGHT" (PHOENIX)

Mr. ST. DENIS, who is now skilfully gardening on the rather difficult English soil in which the drama has to-day to flourish, has established himself with a picked company and a reservoir of aspirants at the Phoenix Theatre. This venture, which presents many parallels to that being made at the Westminster with a fixed company, perhaps suggests the form which is going to overcome some of the difficulties and costs of West End productions for plays which cannot expect a very long run. This return to "a company of players" has great advantages over the assembling of casts *ad hoc*, although of course it is liable to land rather square pegs into rather round holes.

Twelfth Night is particularly rich in good parts, but the team is richer, so that Mr. WILLIAM DEVLIN, for example, has only the limited scope of the faithful sea-captain *Antonio*. The production is indeed an outstandingly good one, and its crown is Miss PEGGY ASHCROFT's performance as *Viola*, a performance that is full of eager youthful resolution and that blends in exact proportions the note of high spirits with the note of a suppressed secret love. She manages to be at once wise beyond her years and a gay and acute companion. She is a perfect contrast with the stately Southern beauty with which Miss VERA LINDSAY invests *Olivia*. I have seldom seen an *Olivia* who gave such quiet decided emphasis to the adjective "rich" in the programme description of "*Olivia, A rich Countess.*" In every gesture Miss LINDSAY suggests a woman of lineage and large income, self-willed and little accustomed to be thwarted, but of too fine a nature to be petulant or merely spoilt. Miss LINDSAY makes it completely intelligible and natural that this *Olivia* is surrounded by a rather eccentric household staff, and that she tolerates from a kind of lordliness the *Aguecheek-Belch* side of her household life. Miss LINDSAY invests *Olivia* too with that distance which keeps the fierce passion of *Orsino* (Mr. ESMOND KNIGHT) at full intensity. She obviously lives and moves on pedestal level. *Orsino*, in Mr. ESMOND KNIGHT's representation of him, is a man passing from

youth. The lineaments of a coming gravity can be seen forcing their way through in speech and action, but he is still young and his tempestuous ardour has an innocence about it.

All these plays of SHAKESPEARE

admirable than when she was glossing over the differences, so very clear to the audience, between *Viola* and her thinner and gaunter twin brother *Sebastian* (Mr. BASIL LANGTON). Not all the help which identity of costumes can lend quite helps the actors over this piece of shameless make-belief. The special personality with which Miss ASHCROFT has invested *Viola*, the spirit of eager companionship which emanates from her, is immediately in contrast with *Sebastian's* thoroughly decent but less inviting companionship.

The commonest fault in modern productions of *Twelfth Night* is to envisage *Malvolio* as the major-domo of an Italian Court and therefore to think that he must be rather ornate and splendid from the first. But the whole point of the practical joke that is played on him, and of his misfortunes in prison, so congenial to the dramatist, is that he is a lean and puritanical killjoy, to be reached and upset through his gross conceit and personal vanity. Mr. GEORGE HAYES brings all this out very well. *Sir Toby Belch* (Mr. GEORGE DEVINE) is a huge hulk of a man, and we feel he would be more at home as one of *Long John*

Silver's men. These high spirits are the making both of the drunken scene and of the scene when *Malvolio* finds the letter, where the irresponsible conspirators take every sort of puss-in-the-corner liberty. *Sir Andrew Aguecheek* (Mr. MICHAEL REDGRAVE) is skilfully dressed in clothes that suggest a prolonged infantilism. If it is hard to see why the tough *Sir Toby* relishes such companionship, this *Sir Andrew* is all of a piece, and his poltroonery becomes the most natural thing in the world.

D. W.

Our Ruthless Contemporaries

"Not Worth Reading," says Sir George Arthur of his reminiscences, and surely there was no need for him to say that."

Church of England Newspaper.

"Another bright spot should be the two numbers by Mr. Pat Kennedy, who will play *Just a Song at Twilight* and *Drink To Me Only*, on a common sow. In addition Mr. Kennedy's fine voice will be heard in popular Irish airs."

Maayan Paper.

The sow will be heard, too. (We just mention it.)



THE HATCHING OF A PLOT

Sir Andrew Aguecheek . . . Mr. MICHAEL REDGRAVE
Maria Miss LUCILLE LISLE
Sir Toby Belch Mr. GEORGE DEVINE

where the plot turns on twins being mistaken for each other present some difficult moments for the actors. Miss VERA LINDSAY was never more



FOR LOVE OF A LADY

Malvolio Mr. GEORGE HAYES
Olivia Miss VERA LINDSAY



"WHAT HAVE YOU THAT CHRISTMAS WOULDN'T BE CHRISTMAS WITHOUT?"

The Back-to-the-Land Period

In early spring, 1939, while it was still not quite certain whether Hitler was about to take Hungary or Rumania, hermitry (as it was broadly and inaccurately called) began all over the world to assume the dimensions of a problem.

In the British Isles official notice was first taken of it as a result of trouble at the Dead Letter Office. Immense piles of unclaimed mail began to accumulate there, and the Dead Letter Office sought statutory powers to destroy it after a shorter period than had till then been necessary.

Questions were asked in the House. The Postmaster-General was asked whether he was aware that discontent was rife among postmen who had to walk miles delivering letters to houses the owners of which had taken to the woods without leaving any forwarding address. He replied that the matter was receiving his attention.

The Minister of Agriculture was asked what he proposed to do about the fact that in the Nottingham district a large number of allotments and kitchen-gardens had fallen out of cultivation owing to the fact that their owners were living like savages in the remains of Sherwood Forest and subsisting on roots.

The Minister of Education was asked whether he was aware that several schools in Greater London and other populous parts of the country had had to close down entirely the pupils having concealed themselves in woods with their parents. He replied that he was attempting to double the

force of truant officers and summoning all parents with whom it was possible to establish contact, but that both these tasks became more difficult every day, because there was now a one-in-three chance that a summons could not be served, and many even of the existing corps of truant officers had already taken to the woods themselves.

The Home Secretary was asked whether he was aware that twelve families, comprising in all thirty-eight people, had barricaded themselves inside a two-hundred-acre estate in North Wales and were living there as a self-contained community, taking no part whatever in A.R.P. and seeming (from the glimpses that could be caught of them) disgracefully contented. He said he was.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer was asked, some time before Budget Day, whether it was correct that a serious problem had arisen in connection with income-tax owing to the fact that many thousands of persons who had hitherto paid it with few murmurs were now impossible to get at, would probably prove even if got at to have no income and therefore be liable for no tax, and had in most cases entirely ceased to use money. He replied that although he would not describe it as a serious problem it was undoubtedly a problem which from some standpoints might be considered, broadly speaking, serious.

The circulation of newspapers and periodicals declined very much, as indeed did the sale of most things, for at this time an increasingly large number of people were living and, apparently, thriving with practically none of the blessings of civilisation at all. At first matches had been found a necessity, but as spring drew on and there was more sun

it became easier to light fires with the help of lenses roughly made from the bottoms of bottles.

The only news to be gleaned about the position of culture is a statistician's estimate that the speech from *As You Like It* beginning "Come, my co-mates and brothers in exile," was quoted more during this period than at any time before or since.

There was no shortage of knives, axes and similar utensils, for each person taking to the woods as a rule provided himself with several. Bows and arrows were less popular than a kind of catapult made with the help of rubber bands taken from the lids of discarded potted-meat-jars and tobacco-tins; many wood-dwellers and troglodytes became exceedingly skilful in the use of these weapons and could stun inquisitive policemen at thirty yards.

Morals varied a great deal, tending to be least orthodox in places where it was easiest to wrest a living from the soil or whatever was there to wrest a living from. (Polygamy was the habit in a community that found itself encamped round an immense cache of tinned and other foods buried by a forgetful millionaire in September, 1938.)

In spite of the magnitude of this exodus to the country the Government's inclination was at first to do nothing, on the assumption that in a few months the situation would adjust itself.

"The first snow 'll send 'em all back," opined a Government spokesman. But this soon came to be considered an unsatisfactory view, for as war seemed more and more imminent concern grew that so many of the people for whose pleasure it was being arranged had managed to manoeuvre themselves into a position of detachment.

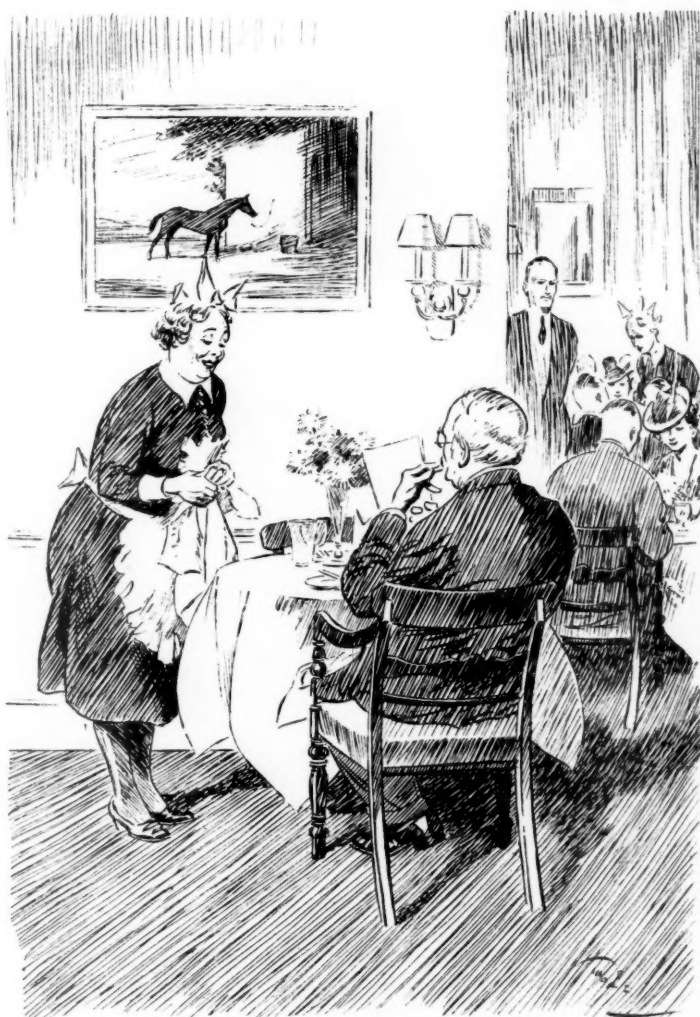
A number of persons who became known as "Government narks" were therefore sent round the country to join the simple-life communities and spread in casual conversation the inaccurate news that there had been revolutions in Germany and Italy, that Hitler and Mussolini had been overthrown, that China had driven out the Japanese and was impregnable, that General Franco having been defeated, Spain was no longer a menace to the Mediterranean trade routes, and that there was a movement for a reconstituted League of Nations which the U.S.A. and the new democratic governments of Germany, Italy and Japan had announced their intention of joining. At the same time certain newspapers printed similar news in copies designed to be left about in the woods.

People began to troop back home almost at once; and, the Government having passed in their absence a law providing that every person found outside his house without a permit would in future be arrested, it was possible to check further hermitry, even when people found that the European situation was in fact even worse than they had left it.

Soon a lovely war began, and a few years later of course everybody all over the world was living in woods and caves, for there was not a building left. This just shows. R. M.

My Daughter Says :

I HAVE a Dog,
And I have a Father:
I love the Dog distractedly;
And Father, rather.
My filial proclivities are slight;
My canine partialities are strong;
So everything that Peter does is gloriously right
And everything that Pater does is wrong.



"WILL YOU TAKE A LITTLE NOËL PUDDING, SIR?"



Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

A Great Romantic

M. ANDRÉ MAUROIS, himself a writer in the classic tradition, calm, clear and impersonal, has a signal understanding of the ardours, the confusions and the egocentricity of romanticism. That is why he has found in *Chateaubriand* (CAPE, 12/6), who set the romantic fireball rolling across the trim fields of French literature and whose life was as highly-coloured as his books, a subject made to his hand. But he has found no easy subject. Apart from the complexities and vicissitudes in the outward life of the great writer who aspired to be a great statesman, the splendours and miseries, the triumphs and the disappointments, there are the ambiguities and contradictions in the character of the man. Because of these CHATEAUBRIAND has often been charged with hypocrisy; and indeed to be set against much undeniable courage and fortitude there are many actions which bear the ugly appearance of time-serving if not treachery. M. MAUROIS, with a liberal philosophy and an acute psychology, understands and condones these as the hesitations of one who for all his vanity was perpetually aware of an inner conflict, and as the tentative essays of an artist whose one constant purpose was to make of his own life a work of art. For the rest, this admirable book is a pageant of France between two revolutions. It is also a long procession of women. But M. MAUROIS, French to the bone, is equal to any number of women; and he portrays them all, from LUCILE DE CHATEAUBRIAND to JULIETTE DE RÉCAMIER, with inimitable grace.

England, Poor England!

Mrs. MARGARET HALSEY came to England with her husband when he was temporarily transferred from a New York professorship to a college in Devon, and on the slender strength of a few months in this remote agricultural district, varied by flying visits to London and the obvious places, she has embarked on a comprehensive criticism of the English which sweeps with what can only be described as girlish gusto from one disrespectful generalisation to another. *With Malice Toward Some* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 7/6) does not hesitate to light a grand universal bonfire of our manners, food, air, hotels, women's clothes and indeed of most of our institutions; nor to make such astounding observations as that the English harbour a "corrosive envy" of the United States (when our fault, and it is a grave one, is that most of us are barely conscious of things American). In the attitude of county society to a couple who had the double misfortune to be born foreigners and possessed of uncomfortably active minds it is not difficult to imagine that Mrs. HALSEY had sound cause for complaint; but if she had stayed another week or so she might have come to like something more than the modesty of our children and railway-porters and the greenness of our countryside. That the book is funny, however, there is no doubt at all. She has a turn of phrase for which much can be forgiven. About Exeter Cathedral she says "it lies across the life of the town like Welsh rabbit on a delicate stomach."

Sons of Lorraine

For three generations the greatest family in France, *The House of Guise* (LINDSAY DRUMMOND, 15/-), has fared badly at the hands of English historians. The devout Flemish mother of the first duke bade her children yield precedence to no man in serving the glory of God; and the Guisard conception of the glory of God, *plus* its temporal implications, has long been held responsible for evils as widely disconnected as the Catholic steadfastness of MARY Queen of Scots—a GUISE on her mother's side—and the Massacre of St. Bartholomew. These biased readings Mr. HENRY DWIGHT SEDGWICK sets himself to modify in a very gallant tribute to an undeniably gallant family of generous and lucky warriors and cultivated and liberal churchmen. He does not deny the occasionally horrible consequences of their policy, but claims that, realising the socially disruptive effect of Huguenot activities, as well as



"LOSER BLOWS UP THE HOUSE OF LORDS!"

the religious peril, they inevitably invoked the usual penalties of an exceptionally ruthless age. With a telling use of contemporary documents, a pleasant style and an unusual standpoint, he has written a picturesque and eminently readable book in addition to erecting an out-size votive candle to the sixteenth-century descendants of St. LOUIS.



De Profundis Victores

EDGAR WALLACE wrote no "thriller" as strange and bizarre as this story of his life by Miss MARGARET LANE. In *Edgar Wallace—A Biography* (HEINEMANN, 10/6) his amazing career is set down without fear or favour and the inconsistencies and vanities of his nature produced for impartial judgment. The impression given is that of one who knew great wealth after extreme poverty, who gave generously (but hardly in secret), who prided himself on being an expert on horses and racing but who lost money consistently on the Turf and bought a stable of "also-rans" that cost six thousand pounds a year to keep; a man with a lazy idle nature, who worked long and furious hours with the shadow of bankruptcy always over him and fifty thousand pounds a year partly to cover his expenditure; who would very rarely accept criticism or advice from anyone. It was RUDYARD KIPLING's verse that made him take up writing and Lord NORTHCLIFFE who gave him his first hint of future fame by appointing him War Correspondent in the Boer War and approved of his somewhat dubious methods of eluding the Censor. His death at Hollywood was typical of his life; he was working furiously to pay off debts, including twenty thousand pounds arrears of income-tax! A dangerous employee even to himself, yet a hero in so many ways.



In Darkest Essex

Readers who have 'flu at Christmas—and goodness knows plenty of them will—might do worse than take a copy of *Marshland Calling* (ROUTLEDGE, 10/6) to bed with them. Mr. S. L. BENSUSAN's short stories and sketches of ultra-rural Essex have all the qualities required for reading between the sheets; they are light, amusing and short, and you can take them in any order. It is sad to think that this volume and its eight predecessors will soon provide a record of the habits of mind and speech of a race that is no more, for already, as the author says, one must travel far to find the old marshland types, and their children and grandchildren are rapidly turning to different ways of life and speech. "Civilisation," the encroachment of "furriners"

SONGS AND THEIR SINGERS.

Carol Singers:—

"OH, REST YOU, MERRY GENTLEMAN,
MAY NOTHING YOU DISMAY!"

Phil May, December 26th, 1896.

from London, and the flight from farming have sounded the death-knell of old marshland. All the more reason why we should thank Mr. BENSUSAN for saving these narrow, bigoted, dishonest and altogether delightful people from oblivion. Of the present collection "Careless Driving" is perhaps the best; *Mr. Sawkins* explaining his philosophy of life to the Bench, with special reference to policemen ("A man gotter hit 'em whiles. He can't help hisself by th' good rights") is in the purest Bensusan tradition.

'Cute Cookery

In cookery it is far more important to have the traditional sense than that of innovation. Not necessarily, mind you, the tradition of England, because we are no longer a race of fox-hunters and peasants and the old pease-pudding-and-pork régime strikes us as heavy. Hence the drift to lighter cuisines, of which the French is the best and the most suitable. In France one never hears of a "clever" cook—one would as soon think of acclaiming a "clever" preacher. And the word "clever," so aptly applied on the jacket to *More Caviare and More Candy* (COBDEN-SANDERSON, 7/6) gives exactly the measure of Lady MARTINEAU's rather dangerous little book of expensive American snippets. With the laudable purpose of helping "young marrieds"—who should be learning their A.B.C. from Mrs. ROUNDELL and M. BOULESTIN—she mingles Worcester sauce and absinthe and covers hare with chocolate sauce until the gorge rises at the affront. Undoubtedly she knows her business, and her practical hints are excellent. So are many of her regional recipes from France, Italy, Spain and South Africa. An experienced cook will use her to advantage—but Heaven help her neophytes and her neophytes' husbands!

The Dog Debunked

The bright idea of guying the follies and failures of dog-adorers—in contradistinction to dog-lovers—must have occurred at the same moment to Miss MARY DUNN, who has written *Beware of the Dog* (COLLINS, 5/-), very funnily illustrated by Mr. NORMAN MANSBRIDGE, and also to Mr. ERIC KEOWN—"ERIC" of *Punch*—who has given us *The Complete Dog's Dudgeon* (HUTCHINSON, 5/-), and Miss NINA SCOTT LANGLEY, who has drawn charming pictures for it. Both books will extract squirms or giggles from every reader, according to taste. The first book is written from the human point of view, the latter from the canine, and, so far from being alike, they form a very good and funny complement each to the other. Having benefited from their astringent qualities, the dog-adorer (reformed) may dip happily into *Who Has a Dog?* (CHAPMAN AND HALL, 7/6), a volume of very sympathetic stories in which dogs play leading but not impossible parts, by Mr. REGINALD ST. JOHNSTON.

The Cult of the Horrible

Moving on familiar ground the COLES (G. D. H. and MARGARET) have taken Oxford for the scene of *Off With Her Head* (COLLINS, 7/6). In a story which introduces several

entertaining characters (notably Dr. Milligan, Master of St. Simon's College) and sets a problem that calls for expert probing two rather obtrusive defects cannot be disregarded. The first is that for once in their lives the COLES may justly be accused of revelling in what is grisly and grim. Even Inspector Fairford of Scotland Yard, who ought to have been nearly hard-boiled, found it difficult "to conceal his sense of horror." Their attempt to create a gruesome atmosphere has been too successful. Secondly a kind of lightning love-affair between Fairford and Dr. Milligan's niece is so superfluous and indeed ridiculous that admirers of these authors' previous detective tales may with reason resent it. But the Master is worth meeting.

The Terrible Turk

The Cabaret Crime (THORNTON BUTTERWORTH, 7/6) is built up on solid foundations, but there is no doubt that some of the actors on Mr. FRANCIS D. GRIERSON's stage are of too familiar a type. No reader of modern detective fiction will, for instance, be surprised to meet an unscrupulous ruffian called Kamil Kazim who, as a kind of side-show in an organised criminal career, resolves to marry an innocent and lovely girl; nor will anyone be absolutely startled when a mysterious individual from the murky past appears and in no uncertain manner puts paid to Kazim's account. An amiable young man of great possessions, who is successful in winning the lovely girl, cannot be said to introduce an original note into this undistinguished but well-written tale.



It is Mr. Punch's annual privilege to become bogged to the knees in Christmas Cards and Calendars submitted for his august approval. This year, apart from the indefatigable MEDICI SOCIETY, the WARD GALLERY send perhaps the most attractive selection—though there is much to please the eye in the van-load (a mere tithe of their full range) delivered by Messrs. RAPHAEL TUCK. The "Cantabrigia" cards from W. HEFFER AND SONS also contain some delightfully original designs. Nature seems to be the keynote of the calendars. Besides the Beautiful Britain Calendar (COUNTRY LIFE), the Naturalist's Calendar (M. C. FORRESTER), and the Roads Beautifying Association Calendar, the Challenge Gallery have produced a calendar of British Birds and one of English Wild Flowers, both in colour. These are all highly commended, though hardly so highly as two published by G. DELGADO, LTD., and Messrs. McCaw, STEVENSON & ORR, the former containing nearly a hundred illustrated jokes from *Punch*, the latter a quotation for every day from the same source.

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Charivaria

"STORIES told by radio comedians are often too long," says a correspondent. However, it's not the length that the B.B.C. objects to—it's the breadth.

★ ★ ★

An Impending Apology

"CHRISTMAS BOX FOR BRITISH FILMS. ANNA NEAGLE TO ACT IN HOLLYWOOD."

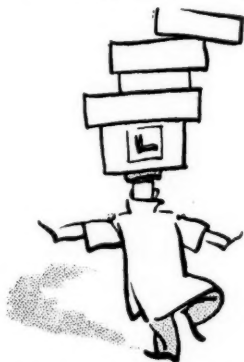
The Star.

★ ★ ★

A man has written to the Press to say he can often see the gas-holder at Southall from his window in the Strand. We can only suggest he should pull down the blinds.

★ ★ ★

A correspondent in a weekly paper asks how noises in the wireless can be prevented. Hasn't he got a knob for switching the thing off?



★ ★ ★

A Dalston man states that his work consists in carrying heavy boxes in each hand all day. At Billingsgate of course they would do that on their heads.

★ ★ ★

"Has anything been done in Scotland regarding rearmament?" asks a reader. Well,

WALLACE'S sword has not yet been returned to its Museum.

★ ★ ★

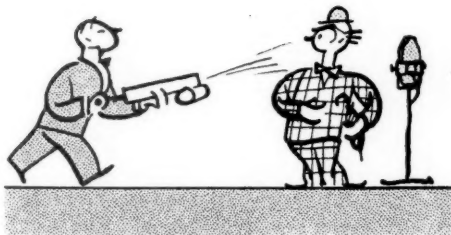
"Take a basin, fill it with boiling water, throw a thick towel over your head and the basin too, and inhale the steam deeply."

"Daily Mail" Health Column.

In other words, go and boil your head.

★ ★ ★

We hear of a doctor who has become a clergyman. Apparently he found it harder to practise than to preach.



The loose-leaf system, we are told, is now spreading to school-books. Particularly, of course, to atlases.

★ ★ ★

Their Good Resolution

"MORE COUNCIL MEETINGS. Gravesend Council is to meet monthly in future instead of fortnightly."

Evening Paper.

★ ★ ★

"Convicts can give an infinite variety of reasons for being in prison," states a writer. The chief being, presumably, that they can't find the way out.

★ ★ ★

The House of Commons rose on December 22 and will not reassemble until January 31. The holidays-with-pay movement is spreading.

★ ★ ★

"Many people," says a scientist, "eat more than they think at this time of the year." Otherwise of course they might easily starve.

★ ★ ★

A good way to make a postage-stamp stick, we read, is to breathe on it instead of licking it. An even better way perhaps is to put the wrong address on the envelope.



★ ★ ★

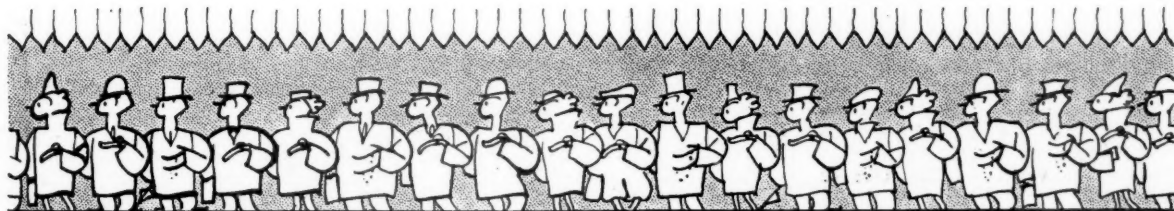
A Seasonable Warning

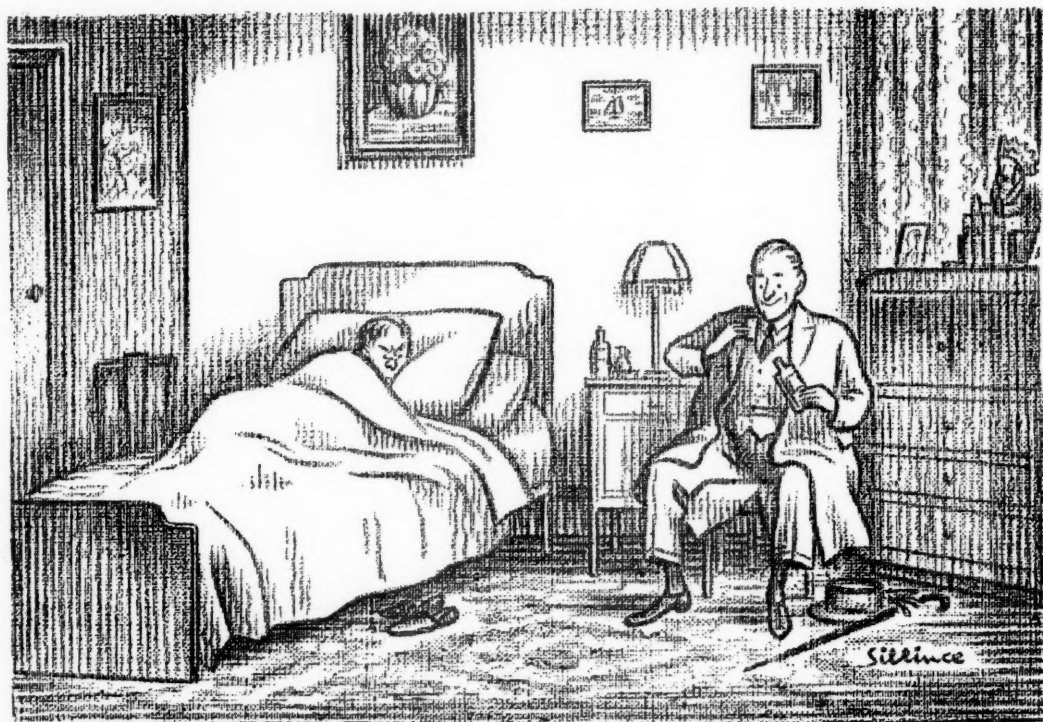
"Don't waste time in searching for your garden . . . stake and tie your pants now, before the south-easters blow."

Advt. in Cape Paper.

★ ★ ★

The railway companies advertise that they are running more late trains and more early ones during the Christmas holidays. Unfortunately no mention is made of more punctual ones.





"I SAY, OLD MAN, WHO'S YOUR CHEMIST?"

Flowers In My Hat

THE sad thing was that, twirled lightly in the hand, it had all the appearance of a perfectly good hat. Some people called it a pork pie, but they were the sort of people to whom it meant nothing that it was made not of crust but of felt, and that, instead of pork, its contents were part of my head. It was pushed in on top, so that a flat balcony ran right round it, and, inside, the maker's name could be dimly seen through an expensive haze of yellow mackintosh. The colour was an indefinable green. Early myrtle, late Stilton and middle pre-Raphaelite are metaphors which suggest themselves, only to be critically rejected.

"It is a hat," its maker remarked to his assistant, "through which the gentleman can fully savour that delicious sensation of inner confidence, whether he be strolling up Bond Street or along the verges of the Test or Hitchen."

"You sound very certain I'm going

to eat it," I said, laying it respectfully on my head.

"I refer to the spiritual contentment which springs from what one of my clients calls a stylish lid," he replied, and both he and his assistant chuckled through set lips as mutes do who swap Stock-Exchange throw-outs on the way to the funeral.

I viewed myself in the glass, first from one angle, then from another, and then I tried changing the glass. But the result was always the same. I looked my very worst under that hat. I looked a man from whom all my better judgment urged me to edge quietly away. I looked frightful.

"Do you swear that this thing is really a replica of my last hat?" I asked.

"Exact," said the hatter. "Bring the calipers, William."

Every measurement proved the same. I had always suspected mathematics to be a twisty science, and now I knew it. That hat damned Euclid up to the hilt. I said so to the hatter.

"I more than understand," he answered. "The transition from a covering to which one has grown attached

to another however similar causes a deep upheaval in the mind which has the effect of quite warping the eye. But you can take my word for it, Sir. . ."

I suppose I was weak, but who isn't?

For about ten days I gave it every chance. I pulled it on carelessly and tried to pretend it wasn't there. Sometimes I managed to forget about it for a few minutes, then I would catch a vague vision of myself in a plate-glass window and a great shuddering of revulsion would seize me. Or else I would be talking to somebody and suddenly realise that my hand was creeping with terrible caution up the side of my face, intent to catch the hat unawares and finish it off brutally for good. Partly on account of this trick, partly just because of the hat, people began to avoid me.

Though it had cost thirty shillings I would have written it off, but no one likes being beaten by a hat. One night I was having one of my nervous crises in a bus after seeing my head silhouetted against Trafalgar Square (which did nothing to help it), and I put the

whole ghastly business to a man who was sitting in front of me, a man with a nice, elderly, well-ordered neck which filled me with confidence.

"Only one thing you can do," he said, turning round to me and looking quickly away again, "leave it out in a storm. Glass is going down to-night, now's your chance."

Directly I got home I lashed the hat upside-down on the sundial, and I had scarcely got into the house again when drops of rain the size of small bombs began to fall. They went on falling furiously all night, and when I went out after breakfast and got the hat it would no longer go on my head at all. There were obvious advantages in this, but to let it rest at that was only, I felt, burking the issue.

Staying in my house was fortunately a man who said I could leave the hat to him. I was about to ring up my solicitors to arrange a codicil when he picked the hat up and, placing it

over the knob of the banisters, began to lean outwards. His seventeen stone made such an immediate impression on the hat that it expanded visibly. After no more than ten seconds he gave it back to me, and it not only went on but had no idea where to stop.

Half an hour in the bath followed by a long rest on the hot tank brought it round again, or at any rate oval. But it still looked awful, and in conjunction with me it looked even worse. Together we looked absolutely terrible. By this time I was wide open to suggestions and getting them hot and fast. The notion that the hat would blend more acceptably with my face if I were to tuck a few trout-flies into the side seemed a good one, but I found that three or four small dry flies didn't affect the ensemble in the least, so I added the loudest sea-trout flies in my box and went on until quite a lot of the hat was obscured. But it looked much the same. Even after I'd added

all the salmon-flies I could find, the ugly soul of that hat still seeped through. I tried it on as calmly as I could in front of one of those blackened mirrors which are the kindest I know, and then and there I came to the conclusion that I couldn't be seen dead in it, not even on the Manchester Ship Canal after the gudgeon season had drawn to its fitful close. So I took all the flies off again, though their parting left the band permanently out of tune.

It was not until other ornaments had been suggested that the view was put forward that a violet or two tacked to the upper deck might work wonders. And at the mention of flowers my heart leaped, for I knew then just what to do with my hat.

As I write it is lying on its back on the table beside me, and already the first spears of my early tulips are brim-high.

For the first time it looks really beautiful.

ERIC.



"JUST TALK TO ME ON ANY SUBJECT—EXCEPT HUNTING."

Aunt May's Christmas

THE mistletoe is getting ripe—
 Oh, let's for once arrange
 Some newer, less restricted type
 Of Christmas for a change.
 With every servant sent away
 And no relations near
 A week of carefree holiday
 To end an anxious year.

*But think of Aunt May, think of Aunt May!
 Year after year we have asked her to stay.
 Yes, 'twould be lovely to get right away;
 But what would she think of us? Think of Aunt May.*

Where shall we spend the time? In one
 Of those superb hotels
 Where swift obsequious waiters run
 To peals of Christmas bells;
 And Jew and Sassenach and Scot
 On New Year's Eve entwine
 With new acquaintance soon forgot
 To strains of Auld Lang Syne?

*But think of Aunt May, think of Aunt May!
 She's already arranged where her Tabby shall stay
 And she's sending her maid to her home in Herne Bay.
 She'd never get over it; think of Aunt May.*

Or shall we cruise? How good to leave
 A locked, unhollied home,
 And watch the sun-white liner cleave
 Fresh paths of leaping foam
 South, till the skies, no longer bleak,
 Burn into blue, and soon
 Madeira gives December's cheek
 The kiss of constant June.

*But think of Aunt May, think of Aunt May!
 Choosing her semi, deciding on grey;
 And it's only with us that she goes to a play.
 A cruise would be heaven, but think of Aunt May.*

Or else there's Cannes. How good once more
 To find one's wagon-lit
 Glide past that ever-magic shore
 Of palm and purple sea!
 Or Switzerland; to watch a wreath
 Of pale dawn roses shine
 On topmost Jura, and to breathe
 Pure air like frozen wine.

*But think of Aunt May, think of Aunt May!
 With her presents tied up and put neatly away,
 And she'd wait for our letter and day after day
 Wonder and wonder. Oh, think of Aunt May!*

* * * * *
 We planned the dinner dish by dish,
 We cooked the Christmas bird;
 We served the pudding with a wish
 For joyous trips—deferred.
 Old custom held us in its clutch
 And Duty's voice spoke clear,
 And this year's Christmas Day was much
 Like Christmas every year.

*We wrote to Aunt May, we had her to stay,
 The crackers were pulled and our voices were gay;
 And we're making new plans for our next Christmas Day—
 And we'll end up, as usual, by asking Aunt May.*

Forcursue on Golf

(Being notes by the long handicap player for the long
 handicap player, compiled by General Sir Armstrong For-
 cursue, K.B.E., C.S.I., and others.)

NOTE NUMBER FOUR

How to Cure a Slice

The best way to cure a slice is to try to slice: you will never be able to do it. The same applies to any bunker you are trying to avoid. Endeavour to play your shot bang into the middle of the bunker. (Very effective. Sent by Colonel Eric Pype, D.S.O., Kenya.)

NOTE NUMBER FIVE

Clubs

Much care and time should be taken in the selection of golf clubs. Above all things avoid the matched sets which are now strongly favoured by the expert. They are poor characterless things, and all more or less alike as two peas.

After years of experimenting I have at last got together what I consider to be the ideal set for an average long handicap golfer. Here it is.—*Armstrong Forcursue.*

(a) Driver. Old dreadnought pattern, heavily weighted with 1 lb. 8 oz. of lead.



(b) The Rutgutter. This is for getting out of cart ruts. (Made by Mohamed Ali, Tin Smith, Putrid-shindi.) The Roughover caddies' nickname for this club is Dirty Dick. I call it Richard the Ever Ready.



(c) The Aquer. For playing out of ditches, ponds, marshes, lochs, peat-bogs, etc. The hole in the middle of the club-face is very helpful for reducing water resistance before impact.



(d) The Furzer. Dual purpose for whin work.



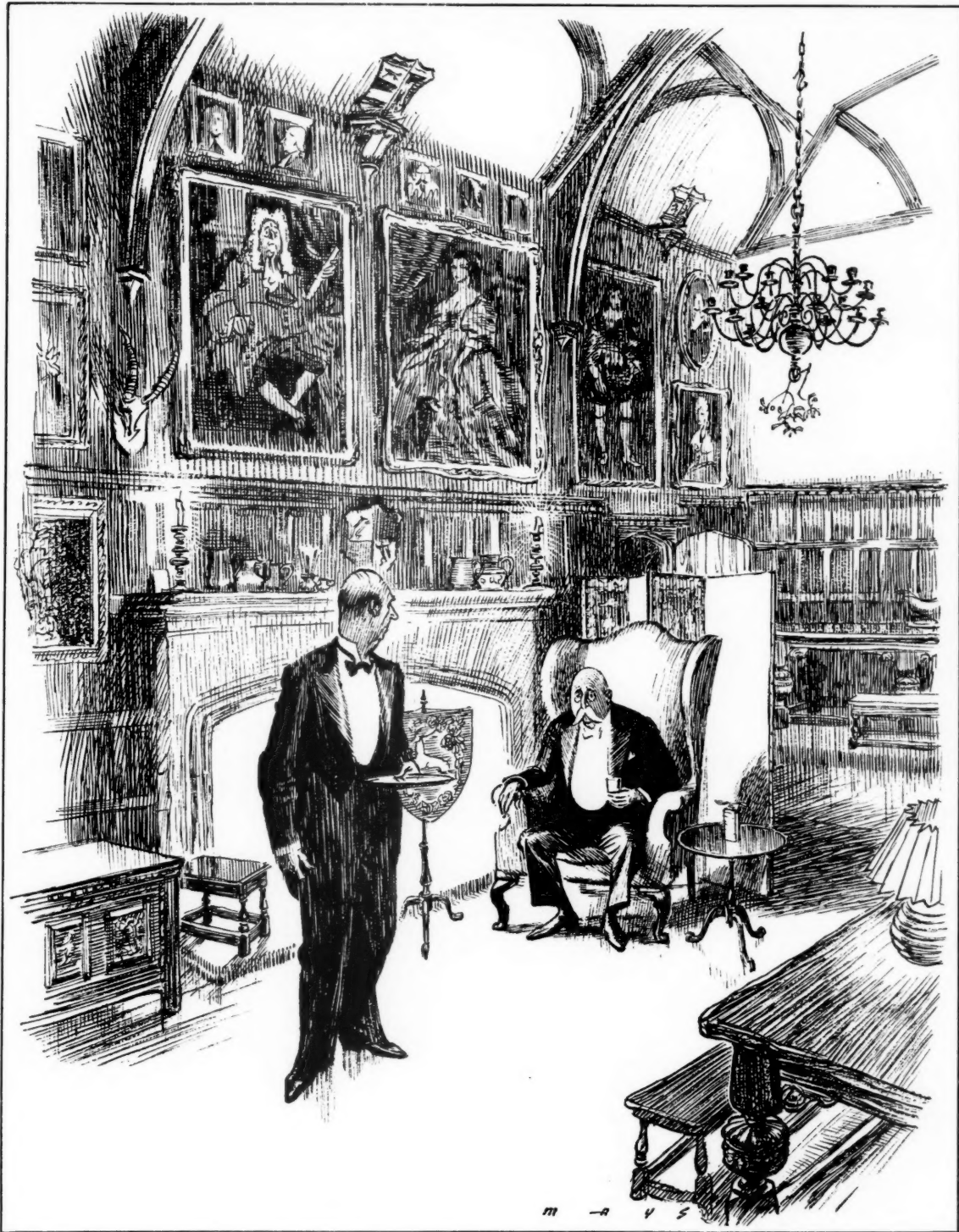
(e) Special Lucky Pig Putter. Very effective when fortune is bestowing her favours elsewhere.

(f) to (l) In addition to the above I use seven other clubs for sand bunker work. They were all made to my own specification by a well-known armament factory.

N.B.—The above clubs are the only ones I ever find necessary.

I also, however, carry the following in my bag:

Sawn-off shot-gun with blank cartridges (ostensibly for



"Oh—and, Parker, make me up an apple-pie bed."



"DID YOU RING, SIR?"
 "YES, YES. DID YOU ANSWER THE BELL?"

scaring sheep). Housewife with large supply of buttons, safety-pins, etc. Old spiked ski-ing stick for prodding recalcitrant caddies. Also vast array of impedimenta suitable for putting my opponent off his shot.

Admiral Sneyring-Stymie sometimes carries a small butterfly-net with a telescopic handle extending to ten feet. This he uses for extracting his ball from rabbit-burrows, foxes' earths, secretaries' funk-holes, etc.

For playing a shot where the golfer must stand hard up against a barbed wire fence, A. V. M. of Norfolk carries a well-stuffed cushion for the better protection of his person.

NOTE NUMBER SIX

The Wind in its Relationship to Golf

Expert Golfer. You should always disregard the wind.

Long Handicap Golfer. But how?

Expert Golfer. You should make up your mind that there is no wind there.—*From the play "A Golfer's Widow."*

[To this I say "UTTER GAMMON!"—*Armstrong Forcursue.*]

Here are some helpful hints for playing in a wind:—

(a) It is not at all necessary to hold up your handkerchief on the first tee (or for that matter a wet finger) to see which way the wind is blowing. Firstly, it is "side." Secondly, it is a well-accepted fact that the wind always blows directly into the face of all long handicap golfers.

(b) Remove anything from the person by means of

which the wind would make an irritating whizzing sound—trout-flies from the cap, deadly nightshade from the button-hole, etc. [I have constantly had to complain to Sneyring-Stymie about putting sea-gulls' feathers in his deer-stalker. In a nor'-wester they make a noise like an electric power-station going full out.—*Armstrong Forcursue.*]

(c) To obtain a sufficient wind-break get the caddie to stand immediately in front of the player and just out of range of the forward swing of the club. This done, play for a slice or a pull so as to circumvent the caddie. If the player is fully confident play the ball between the caddie's legs.

(N.B.—Always check up on the Club's third-party insurance policy to see that you are well covered before attempting this latter shot. Claims for dead caddies vary from some £240 in civilised countries to a couple of goats in uncivilised countries. Lionel Nutmeg lost a year's seniority for killing two caddies in one month at Kuala Gunong, F.M.S., 1923.)

For those who find it a physical impossibility to play golf in a gale, Hamish McWhigg of Edinburgh (handicap 23) has just invented a special "Save Your Eyes Wind Eliminator." It is described as a cross between a fencing visor, the official headgear of the Ku Klux Klan and a gas-mask for dogs. The more expensive models have a windscreen wiper on the plate-glass face-piece. All complete in Harris Tweed, 17/6. In tartan (McGregor, Cameron, Gordon or McWhigg). £1 1. Post paid.

G. C. N.

(To be continued)

A Posting Oversea

It was astonishing how quickly the news spread. William's tailor wrote first and said he was ready to measure William for his tropical outfit. And then the bank wrote, congratulatory, but testy on second reading, with a reference to the sum on the wrong side of the page.

Aunt Alice came. She always follows unexpected news and sad occasions, like the undertaker's mute. Only she isn't mute.

"Well," she said, "this is unfortunate, isn't it? Just when you've bought a fur coat. You won't need it there. Such an unhealthy place. Malaria . . ." and she named all the other diseases common to the tropics. "You can't take the children. They'll come home yellow. Positively yellow. It's the heat, you know, dear, and mosquitoes, and no fresh food. You have to *boil* everything. When your Uncle Arthur was out there there was trouble with the natives."

I said we were going to Singapore, not Burma, and Aunt Alice said it was all the same. The natives, when Uncle Arthur was there, didn't exactly mutiny, but they rebelled, and Uncle Arthur had to march days and days in the jungle, and the soles of his feet were— Yes, she said, she knew William didn't have to march. Though the other day she read that two airmen had to march quite a long way when they were lost. I mustn't forget mosquito-boots and topees, good thick ones, and it was a good idea to buy those spine pads, Uncle Arthur said; and would we like to buy his camp-bed and mosquito-net? They were in very good condition.

Mavis rang up. It was too, too exciting for me, she said. Her friend Veronica had just come back from there and she'd had an intoxicating time. Dances every night and races every day, and the Navy in and out—and I knew what *that* meant. One long party.

"Of course you'll need the smartest of clothes you've ever had. You see it is *the* place in the world and everybody goes there now. . . . My dear, she says you *never* wear a topee. Do you want to look like one of Noel Coward's planter's wives in that thing years ago? Spectator sports for daytime and splash out at night. And she had a hot-water-bottle every night, and two in the rains, when it is positively *freezing* cold. And would you like to buy any of her things—she's about your size? Hats, she says, and

evening-dresses and a cocktail-suit in lamé. . . ."

The C.O.'s wife called. It just depended, she said, what you liked. Some people liked the East, others didn't. Chinese servants were better than Indian, in her opinion. I'd better take a sewing-machine and no rugs or silver or valuables, because of the bandits.

I said were we talking about the same place, and she had meant China, but she said it was all the same. If I wanted clothes for the voyage she had some cotton tennis dresses . . .

William's sister had a friend who said, "Take everything, because if there is a war you'll be stuck there and won't get back for years, because it is the first thing the enemy will go for."

Another woman said, "Don't take good clothes whatever you do; they rot in the heat and the local tailors can run up anything." And another, like Veronica, seemed to think it was Paris on the Equator, but it was Calcutta she meant.

We also had a printed form that said: "It is inadvisable to take a nursery governess because of the Paucity of Society." And William's mother had a friend whose children's governess *loved* it and married frightfully well, and now has two cars and a yacht.

A man who had been there ten years ago said you could live on your allowances and bank the rest. Someone who had been there three years ago said you got no allowances at all, they had all been cut. Somebody else said it was a frightfully lonely existence as it was miles out of the town and it rained every day, and all you had to look at

was the Dock. Then a friend of William's said whisky was four bob a bottle and we'd live in the Europe Hotel; and another man shouted him down and said it wasn't there any more but we'd have a flat with a lift and h. and c. And the friend's wife said we'd not have a flat but a house built on pillars, with scorpions on the walls and orchids in the garden, but it wasn't safe to eat the fruit.

Uncle Arthur rang up and said were we being inoculated against plague, as he'd just seen in the papers . . .

Mavis wrote on a postcard: "You can get face-cream everywhere and Veronica's hats for ten shillings." And our landlord had a brother who said you dined in a *sa:ong* under a punkah, and we'd better take out a store of tinned food.

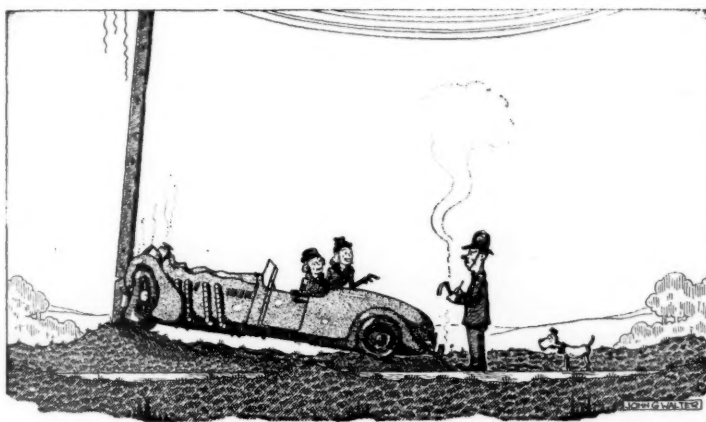
I had bought everything and sold my fur coat, though I hadn't stocked up for a siege or got mosquito-boots or sacked the governess or given up the idea of going because there were no allowances, yet gone wild with extravagance because there were, when William rang up from the office. The posting, he said, was cancelled. We were not going to Singapore but to Scotland.

We agreed it was all the same.

"Another practical stocking for day wear is one with a double toe, one inside the other. It is made so that when either the inner or outer toe develops a hole the other can be cut away, leaving a flawless stocking."

The Times.

Pardon us—a flawless hole.



"AH! THAT'S WHERE WE'VE GOT YOU, OFFICER; NEITHER OF US WAS DRIVING."

At the Pictures

LOTS OF SONG

AS DEANNA DURBIN grows up—what is she now, sixteen?—her stories, not surprisingly, grow up with her. *That Certain Age* is one long examination from the grown-up angle of what appears to be called that certain age. (The phrase comes in the song that serves for finale and overture: perhaps that's one excuse for it.) If DEANNA DURBIN were a less admirable actress—in her other films her ability often struck me as miraculous; now it merely seems instinctively perfect—the whole thing would be, terrible. But she makes all the difference to this trivial school-girl's-crush story, on which the dew of innocence and the petals of charm have been strewn with so lavish and expert a hand. She plays a newspaper-owner's daughter who falls in love with her father's chief war correspondent when he comes to stay. The story is just that: her worship, his embarrassment and discomfiture, their efforts to cure her. Of course she sings at intervals, but not much attempt is made this time to fit the music into the story.

MELVYN DOUGLAS is the war correspondent. She has a sweetheart of her own age to whom she is reunited at the end: JACKIE COOPER does this part very well. Her Understanding father and mother are JOHN HALLIDAY and IRENE RICH.

I think this is far from being DEANNA's best film, but she herself is good. She appears to be one of the people who can't help being good; quite apart, I mean, from the charm, happiness and good-nature with which she conquers everybody to begin with, and quite apart even from her extraordinary singing ability.

The audience, when I was there—except for an irascible old lady by herself near me who kept ejaculating "Stupid" and "Silly" at the wrong moments—loved every minute of it.

In *The Great Waltz* too there are a lot of high notes from a soprano: rather too many, I would venture to suggest. They are poured forth by MILIZA

KORJUS (pronounced, as the trailer will tell you, "Gorgeous") with an energy, an almost mechanical precision and a rather fixed smile unequalled by any other soprano in my experience, to the strains of STRAUSS waltzes, STRAUSS songs and STRAUSS ballet-music. For this is the story of the life of JOHANN STRAUSS II., though it concentrates (a note at the beginning says) on "the spirit rather than the facts of his life," and all the characters are imaginary

hear it from a shepherd's horn, the chirp of a bird and so on.

The heavy emotional scenes are not so good—heavy is in fact the word. LUISE RAINER plays, with her usual delicacy and pathos, the baker's daughter who becomes *Mrs. Strauss* and nearly loses her husband to *Carla* (though I began to be a little worried by that unwinking stare of hers), and Mr. GRAVET is as good as he can be considering some of the dialogue he is given; but the best chances go to the small-part comedy players, who include HUGH HERBERT and HERMAN BING.

JULIEN DUVIVIER directed; I doubt whether he was very happy in the job. The photography though is first-rate, and there is some interesting "montage"; most of his influence perhaps is to be seen there.

Paris Honeymoon seems to me the least distinguished (to put it mildly) picture that BING CROSBY was ever in. The story seems to have been thrown together by a number of people commonly employed in thinking up "gags" for short comedies, and there are great stretches of dullness. FRANCISKA GAAL is allowed to be charming at intervals; AKIM TAMIROFF is good and funny; BEN BLUE, EDWARD EVERETT HORTON and SHIRLEY ROSS are wasted; and Mr. CROSBY sings one good song (in the first five minutes). Poor stuff, after *Doctor Rhythm* and *Sing, You Sinners*.

There are several other new films in London at the moment, but they will all, I suppose, be gone by the time you read this. *A Christmas Carol* I didn't think much of, though REGINALD OWEN acts with gusto as *Scrooge*. The most interesting of the others seems to be *White Banners*, which, after one has said the worst one can of it (it is sentimental, it is fake-philosophic, it ends with a hackneyed going-out-into-the-snow renunciation scene), still remains strikingly well done. It also has one or two most amusing scenes. FAY BAINTER, CLAUDE RAINS, JACKIE COOPER and the other players do very well in their several ways, helped a good deal by EDMUND GOULDING's direction. This is literally the only "weepie" or "tear-jerker" I ever felt in the least inclined to see again.

R. M.

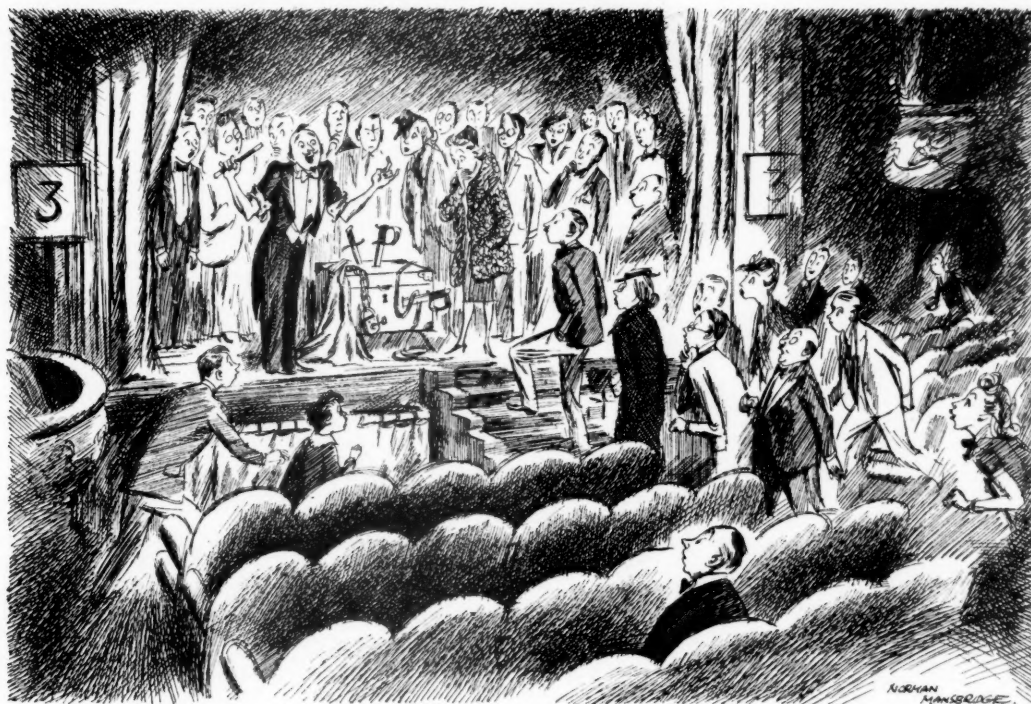


AN ANGLE ON HER BRIDEGROOM

Johann Strauss FERNAND GRAVET
Poldi LUISE RAINER

except the Emperor Franz Joseph and the great man himself.

Anyway, they've got all his best-known music in somehow. I may reassure anyone who fears a surfeit of "The Blue Danube": it is not "plugged." But easily the best part of the film musically is the scene in which Strauss (FERNAND GRAVET), *Carla Donner* the opera-singer (MILIZA KORJUS), and an old coachman (CHRISTIAN RUB) together "compose" the "Tales from the Vienna Woods" waltz as they drive through the woods in question, picking up each theme in turn as they



"FOR THIS NEXT ILLUSION I SHALL REQUIRE THE SERVICES OF JUST ONE FURTHER MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE."

Deanna Not To Grow Up

I HAVE loved many a star since those dim days
When stars were only to be seen, not heard;
Dainty Deanna has my truest flame.

And most were young and fair, and some could act,
And some (a few) when talkies came could speak,
And some (and those were fewer still) would sing.

At last one rose, Deanna, best of all,
At whose short-skirted radiance all the stars
Their ineffectual fires began to pale.

And she was very pleasing to the eye,
And pleasant to the ear, and she could act,
And when she sang she did not croon or scoop,

And she was young and happy as the day;
And my great heart went out to her no end;
Do not grow up, Deanna, till you must.

And other films she made, and for two years
There has been none like her in my regard,
Not even Ginger, though I love her too.

But now, e'en now, there comes a boding
change
When for one sharp sad moment she appears
High-haired, décolletée, in her mother's frock.

I did not think it suited her at all,
And my great heart turned from her as a
thorn
Turns from the sea. The shock was most severe.

It passed. But still the solemn thought remains
That, e'en with her, the flapper stage must
fade,
And what will be the fruitage who can say?

Will she, as now, be first in my regard?
Will Ginger take her place, or someone else?
These be deep searchings. Time along can
show.

Do not grow up, Deanna, till you must.
Dainty Deanna has my truest flame. DUM-DUM.

A Hundred Years Back

It is the sad fashion to-day to believe that never was the cosmic mess so messy—never was the future of the world so formidable and the contribution of our country so feeble.

In particular we are inclined to look back and envy the Victorian era, when things were so much more placid and peaceful. But we do not look very closely.

Let us look back about a hundred years. In 1837, as in 1937, there was a new monarch on the throne. The Ministry and the Parliament were two years old. There was trouble in Spain. There was also trouble about the British attitude to the trouble in Spain. The words "intervention" and "non-intervention" were current and common; and the British Government, as usual, was doing the wrong thing about Spain.

"A squadron under Lord John Hay was ordered to the coast of the Peninsula with instructions to lend moral, and a certain material, aid to the Queen's party. But it was no more effective than the *unlucky British legion, which had been assisting Isabella, with little success or glory, under Orders in Council issued in 1835. The force was dissolved in 1838. The active intervention of Great Britain in Spanish politics ceased, but not before it had damaged the relations between the government of Great Britain and that of France.*"—"The Political History of England," Vol. XII., LOW AND SANDERS.

To-day we hear whispers, and more, against the "autocratic" manner in which the Prime Minister conducts the country's foreign policy, keeping his colleagues in the dark, in the cold, and so on.

A hundred years ago our foreign policy was in the hands of a statesman named PALMERSTON,

"who acted often without the concurrence and sometimes without the cognisance of his colleagues.

"He maintained the principle . . . of encouraging what was conceived to be the liberal and constitutional cause in Continental Europe and of opposing the autocratic despotisms."

(There are sniffers who do not agree that this is the policy to-day, Bobby, but the problem sounds familiar, does it not?)

* * * * *

But Spain was not the only trouble. Russia was a trouble—about Turkey and about Afghanistan.

And Europe was not the only

trouble. Ireland was a trouble—and Canada was a trouble—and Jamaica (nearly always in the news—as now) was a bad trouble.

What is this alarming passage about Canada?

"The insurrection broke out afresh and became somewhat threatening, since it was complicated by a guerilla invasion from the United States, where the rebels had many sympathisers. . . ."

Good heavens! America invading Canada! At least the National Government of to-day has not caused anything like that.

Ireland of course was a permanent mess. We read without surprise that the British Government (1838) was guilty of "ineffectual concession, associated with half-hearted coercion"; and on the same page that "the result was regarded as a triumph for the Opposition and a somewhat humiliating surrender by the Government."

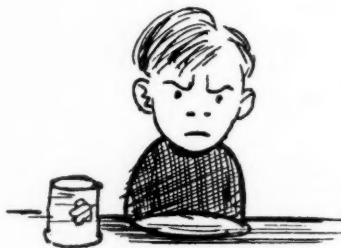
"The Government" in short, "had lost prestige by its conduct of both Irish and Canadian affairs. It was further to be discredited by its difficulties with the colony of Jamaica."

Feeling raged high "in the hearts of the English people." But "Parliament and London Society" (true to form) "were much inclined to ignore the whole subject. . . . Crowded meetings . . . petitions with a million names . . . the astonished politicians of Westminster were confronted with something like a national demand. . . . The nation won. And "a resolution was carried in a *thin House*" ("slack attendance" as usual) "on May 22, 1838."

On the Jamaica Bill (1839) the Government majority "fell to 5 in a House of 583"; and, by the way, in the Lords "they were not supported at all."

So they resigned. Then came the famous "Bed-chamber question"; and they continued in office after all.

Crisis, in fact, after crisis: one thing after another.



"DID YOU SAY CHOCOLATE ÉCLAIR OR MÉRINGUE?"

"The country" (1840) "was in a disturbed and somewhat disorganised condition, still tossing heavily in the trough of the depression. . . ."

"The suppression of manual labour by machinery and the displacement of *agriculture* and rural industry by manufacture had been making rapid progress. The result seemed temporarily disastrous. . . ."

The villagers poured into the towns, which were swollen hastily to an unwieldy bulk.

"There was much suffering and much impatience with the prevailing social and political order. Agitation, often revolutionary and violent, was rife. . . ."

And the poor old House of Commons, as usual, was deaf and blind.

"It had little understanding of the processes that were maturing outside its walls. The industrial and the social revolution went on almost unnoticed by statesmen and politicians absorbed in the party controversy. Bad trade and the decline in consumption told upon the revenue. . . . ALL SPRING RICE'S BUDGETS SHOWED A DEFICIT. . . ."

But at last (in 1841) "after an eight-nights' debate" (Golly!) the Budget was destroyed and the Ministry too.

"But English Cabinets do not always know when they are beaten. Melbourne and his colleagues tried to cling to office a little longer, if only to influence the approaching General Election. . . ."

"But on a direct vote of confidence they were defeated by one vote—312 to 311" (what fun they had then!) "and Parliament was dissolved."

* * * * *

What is the moral, Bobby? Well, nothing in particular perhaps. But GLADSTONE and DISRAELI were then young Members of Parliament, though GLADSTONE's maiden speech had passed unnoticed by anyone, and DISRAELI's was not a striking success. There were one or two other good men coming along; and though it seems that for the rest of the century there was nearly always some sort of a war going on, there were some good days coming too. In fact there was the contented Victorian era, to which we look back with such regret.

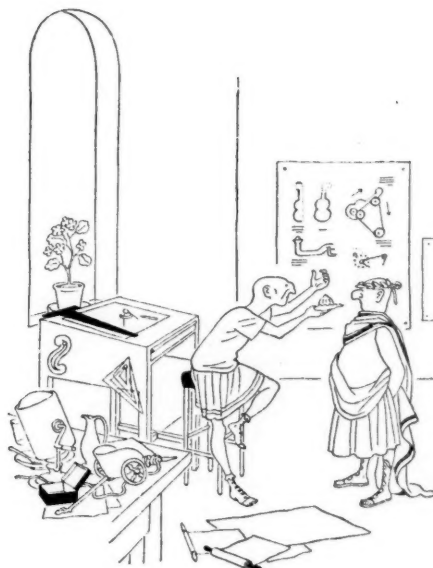
So I find this cursory glance into the past a little cheering at the end of the grim year 1938. No doubt the men of those days did not in fact have to contend with troubles or prepare for foes on the same scale as ours.

But I expect they *thought* they did, so to speak—don't you? A. P. H.

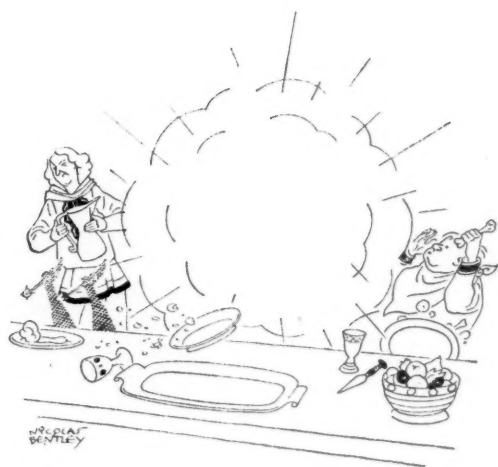
More Clerihews



Inspiration visited Herrick
During a mixed foursome at North Berwick.
When his partner had sliced into a drain
He wrote "To Anthea, Who Gives Him a Pain."



Caius Julius Caesar
Patented a lemon-squeezer,
Also an ice-cream freezer
And a chariot axle-greaser.

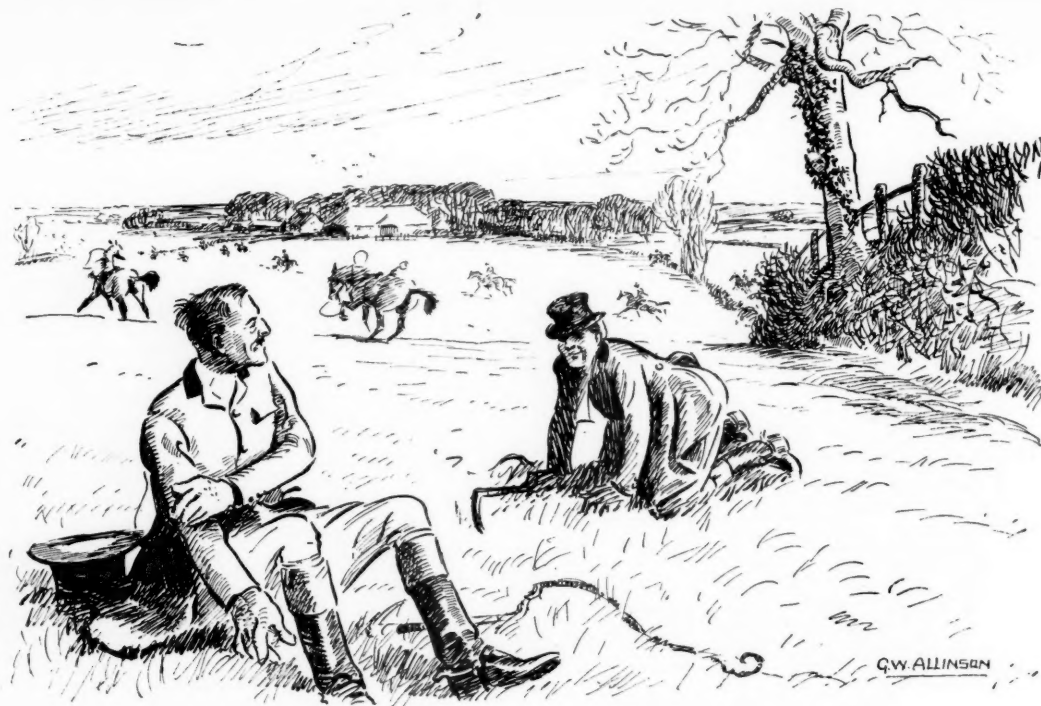


Henry the First
Ate lampreys till he burst.
His unfortunate decease
Simply ruined the Norman peace.



Bishop Stubbs
Was expelled from all his clubs
For disparaging the Oxford crew
In *The Quarterly Review*.

E. C. B.



"THAT REMINDS ME—AREN'T YOU STANDING FOR MIDDLEHAMPTON?"

Christmas Ad Lib

["Christmas, or at least the Christmas celebration, lasts three weeks in some parts of Norway. . . ."]

My enjoyment's keen and hearty of the purely tribal
party
Which attends our local Lares as a rule on Christmas
Day;
Of the bounties at my table it's surprising what I'm
able
Without obvious inconvenience, at my age, to stow
away.

None as yet has cast aspersion on my methods of
diversion,
I can crack a joke as blithely as an almond or a nut;
When I've ventured on a caper in my diadem of
paper
I have never been regarded as an imbecile or mutt.

I'm appropriately festive and you cannot call me
restive;
Our customary beano brings no pallor to my
cheeks,
But would care avoid my doorway if we aped the
vogue of Norway,
Where the revelling apparently is carried on for
weeks?

Life, I fear, might soon prove murky through incessant
bouts of turkey;
As I turned a jaded optic on the gaudy tinsel hat
My old pulse would feebly flutter and the jests I'm
wont to utter
(Which are seldom over-brilliant) would become
extremely flat.

To remain on good relations with one's kith on these
occasions
Is comparatively easy for the usual day or two;
But for weeks to house and feed 'em were a total loss
of freedom.
Just imagine too the quarrels! No, it really
wouldn't do.

Let the youthful and the stronger pine for Christmas
to be longer,
For interminable feasting and the never-ending
spree;
But I thank the gods' bestowal of a brace of days at
Noël;
I have come to the conclusion that they're quite
enough for me.
A. K.



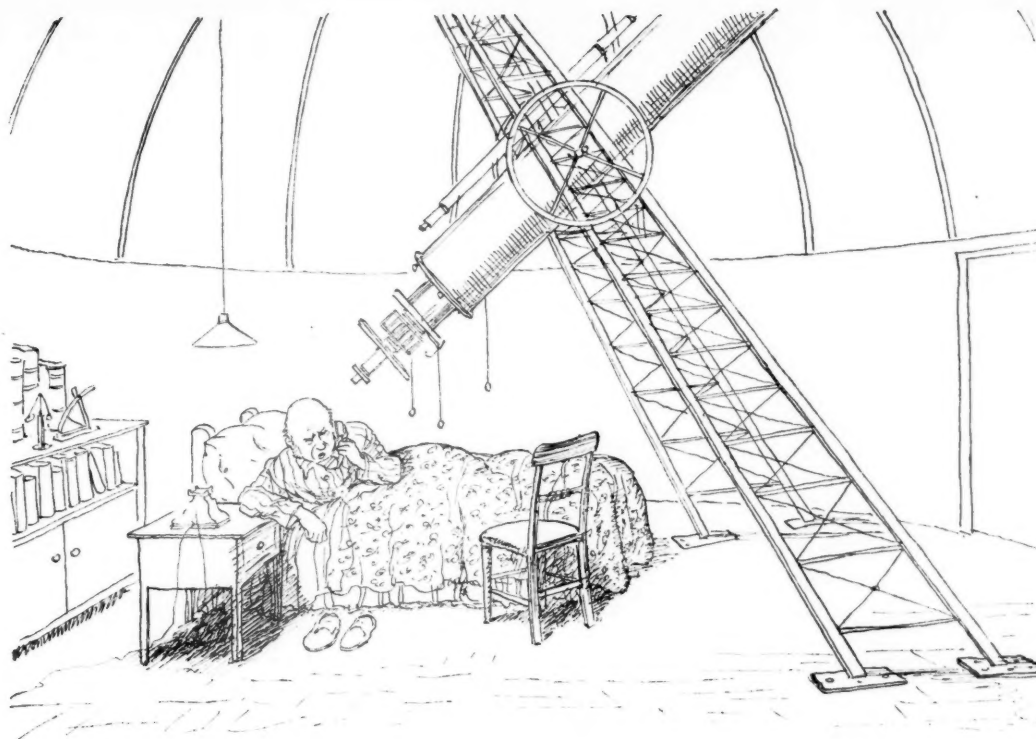
OLD YEAR'S PARTY

The Four Great Powers. "Ooh-er."

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"PRO. 3754. IS THAT THE EXCHANGE? WOULD YOU PLEASE GIVE ME A RING FIVE MINUTES BEFORE THE OCCULTATION OF SIRIUS BY PLUTO?"

Letters to Officialdom

XXVII.—Re Heavens

To the Astronomer-Royal, The Royal Astronomical Society, Burlington House, London, W.

DEAR SIR,—Is it not high time that the Royal Astronomical Society followed the practice of certain newspapers in giving the people guidance and advice based on a survey of the stars and planets? I am sure that an authoritative ruling by your Society would be welcomed by all who, like my wife and me, take *The Sunday Senate* and *The Daily Diet* and order their lives according to the prognostications given by *The Senate* and *The Diet* astrologers.

There are others too. Last month, for instance, in a weekly periodical habitually devoted to the lighter side of life, an earnest attempt to help people in this way was made by an astrologer signing himself OBOE. This OBOE advised people to cultivate

mushrooms in their cellars and wear pink underclothes. Now clearly an authoritative ruling here would have been invaluable. Several doubts immediately assail the mind. Should one eat the mushrooms that one cultivates? Should one grow them underneath or on top of the coal? Should one wear pink underclothes *only*, without the usual outer vestments? And suppose, as may be the case with some people, one does not happen to possess pink underclothes, how does one obtain them without infringing the condition laid down?

Mind you, Sir, I do not question for a moment the sincerity of these astrologers, but it does seem to me, in view of their sometimes indefinite and even inadequate statements, that their telescopes and trigonometry are not consistently reliable. And led astray by a misread cosine or a faulty lens, they can jeopardise the prospects of millions.

Indeed only last Monday I myself had a most mortifying experience, and all who acted on *The Diet* astrologer's

advice that day must have suffered as much as I did. I propose therefore to tell you what happened to me so that you will realise how urgent is the need for action by the Royal Astronomical Society. You may of course read this letter to the Society if you wish.

First of all *The Diet* astrologer said that, owing to the coincidental juxtaposition of Eros and Alpha Crambo, a journey on that day would be attended with beneficial results. I accordingly gave up the idea of doing a day's gardening, changed into my new herring-bone plus-four suiting, canary cardigan, tartan hose and fawn velour, had some sandwiches cut, walked to Rumborough and took a bus for Salisbury. I did not tell my wife where or why I was going because I wanted the beneficial results to be a surprise for her.

Before going further, let me explain the reason for my actions so far. I had sandwiches cut, walked to Rumborough and journeyed by bus because *The Diet* astrologer said, "Spend frugally and save pennies if possible."

But I donned my new herring-bone plus-four suiting, canary cardigan, tartan hose and fawn velour because he said, "Remember, appearances are everything."

Having got into the bus I glanced casually round to see if there was anyone present from whom I might benefit, such as Mr. Winch, who owes me ten shillings and has been avoiding me ever since I lent it to him. But recognising only a couple of shopkeepers to whom I happened to owe small sums, I decided that, as my journey had not started, I was being

premature in my expectation of beneficial results.

Presently, when we were several miles from Rumborough, the conductor asked me for my fare. Horrified, I realised that I had left all my money in my other clothes. My first impulse was to give the man my card. Then, remembering the astrologer's warning that the syzygy of Gamma Ludo and Uranus augured well for those who were reticent about themselves, I not only withheld my card but also refused all other information about myself. Upon this the conductor stopped the

vehicle and in the most objectionable manner ordered me to alight.

Summoning up my natural dignity but foolishly leaving my hat on the seat, I descended the steps, slipped on the bottom one, caught both feet in a bramble and turned a somersault into a deep ditch. Blinded with mortification and manure, I staggered to my feet, wiped my eyes, and was relieved to see the bus already on its way. Imagine my surprise, then, on finding that the two shopkeepers to whom I owed small sums of money had alighted also. And conceive of my indignation when they immediately referred to my indebtedness.

In reply I told them tersely that it was my custom to settle accounts at the end of each month, and that their bills were only three weeks old. Their retort to this completely took away my breath. They asked me *why I was leaving Rumborough by myself, in a bus, without any money, refusing to reveal my name and address, and in disguise!* Naturally I was furious. I told them I was making the journey because of the coincidental juxtaposition of Eros and Alpha Crambo, that I was not in disguise but in a new herring-bone plus-four suiting and McFarthing tartan hose, and that I expected beneficial results.

Thereupon one of them started talking to me in quiet solicitous tones while the other went to a telephone-booth down the road and (as I afterwards learned), rang up my wife and informed her that I was "wandering about on the Rumborough Downs and talking very strangely." He then rejoined us, but they both became so offensively patronising that I gave them the slip at the first opportunity. And I had just started walking home, a distance of nearly ten miles, when I recognised my surroundings. I was near the house of a friend who owned a car.

Blessing my good fortune I made my way there, but it was shut up and no one was about. Through the window of the garage, however, I saw my friend's car, so, acting on *The Diet* astrologer's advice ("Let not small obstacles stand in your way"), I smashed the window-frame with a shovel, climbed in, demolished the door-lock with a crow-bar, and five minutes later was driving the car towards Rumborough.

Suddenly I drew up. Was I giving the coincidental juxtaposition of Eros and Alpha Crambo a fair chance? Had this so far been the sort of journey from which anyone could have expected beneficial results? Certainly not. I therefore resorted to my



"YOU JUST MISS HIM, SAR. HE IN HEAH NOT MORE THAN EIGHT MONTH AGO."

original plan and drove to Salisbury, cutting in occasionally and keeping to the centre of the road when cornering because the syzygy of Gamma Ludo and Uranus also augured well for those ready to take small risks.

Reaching Salisbury with a bent wing and a broken head-lamp I was stopped by a policeman. When he addressed me by name I instantly thought that he must have news for me. Here at last was the beneficial result of my journey! I became very excited and drove him without further ado to the address he gave. Disconcerted at first to find that it was a police-station, I was quickly reassured on hearing that my wife wished to speak to me on the telephone. She seemed very moved and implored me to return home at once.

Eager of course to know what beneficial results had come about in my absence I started back, accompanied by a policeman. Why was I being guarded? Had I won a sweepstake? Had I been appointed to a position in the Secret Service?

Alas! Sir, my hopes were dashed to the ground, and the end of this story is a painful one. My behaviour during the day had been most grossly and offensively misrepresented, and you will understand what that means when I say that my wife had a nurse and a doctor waiting for me at my home. And so far from benefiting in any way, I had to meet the expenses of repairing my friend's car and garage, repairing my suiting and buying a new hat, not to mention the fees of the nurse and doctor, the petrol I used and the unpaid bus fare. In all, £12.18.3. I also received a summons for dangerous driving, and but for the timely return of my friend from abroad and his energetic intervention I might have had to answer a graver charge. Nevertheless I suffered the final indignity of having my unhappy experiences described at length in *The Rumborough Gazette* under the heading "Actions of Rumborough Resident Misunderstood: Amusing Sequel."

In view of all this I trust that the Royal Astronomical Society will not delay in taking appropriate action.

Yours faithfully,

CHAS. CURSETT.

P.S.—I was born under the sign of *Pisces*. My lucky stone is the pumice-stone and my favourite colour puce.

O, Si Sic Omnes!

"The Fuehrer shrouded himself in silence. He sat on the Obersalzberg and was invisible. Every time he made a speech they pricked their ears, but not a word escaped from his lips."—*Liverpool Post*.



"'AVIN' PLACED THE LITTLE BALL ON ITS PEG, LADY, THE IDEA IS TO KNOCK IT OFF, IF YOU FOLLER ME."

Country Winter

THE share is bright and the fresh-turned earth is bright,
Breaking clean and brown,
Up the hill to the crown
And down to the hollow,
And a crowd of little birds follow—
Finches, starlings, wagtails, brown, spotted and white.

The light will die and the brilliant colours die;
Homeward we shall tramp.
Cart-tracks grassy and damp;
The lamp in the stables
And the squeak of bats in the gables;
Supper, lamplight, books. A fire by which to lie.



"PERKINS, YOU'RE UPSETTING THE WHOLE COMPANY WITH YOUR MALICIOUS GOSSIP."

The Romance of a Plumber

Love Comes to Mrs. Posset

DEAR GEORGE,—Last week I helped someones courting although now I wonder whether they werent courting disaster. It happened like this. I was musing re Joeys boy a bank gave a start to but it was only two hundred yards and they caught him at the corner and Lucy was reading with her eyes closed when there was a rattatat without. Someone at the door Lucy said. Your intuition amazes me I said. Pipe down on the sarcasm she said, go on go on answer it. I go with all convenient speed as the bard said I said, and let them soandso well wait as I say.

I went and a lady said this is Mrs. Twisses is it? Kindly delete tongue twisting and oblige I said. Lucy came out and said why its Mrs. Posset who I used to do for before William lured me into wedded socalled bliss, you havent changed a bit Madam. Having just spent a fortune having my face hauled up Mrs P. said, that cheers me. I thought you looked different somehow Lucy said, but put it down to this mottled lampshade, wont you come in or wont you?

She came in and said Lucy being wed once ought to of taught me a lesson but romance has snared me again, you remember I went on a cruise soon after you wed? In a boat if I remember rightly Lucy said. Well Mrs. P. said, I was dining tooserl the first night when a very gentlemanly gentleman looked at me in a nice refined way. I continued eating soup but in a manner that showed I had other interests besides and before the cruise was half over I was partnering him at deck tennis, and when we touched Greece and I said arent you popping ashore to see the old ruins Herbert? and he said why should I when I have you? I knew Cupid had struck. Personally George I think Cupid only shot as she is an unmissable target because though she is Lucys old mistress she is certainly no Old Master.

Did he propose? Lucy said. No Mrs. P. said, but he was rising to the bait when we docked, he is coming Thursday to dine and Ive come to ask you to kindly cook for me then

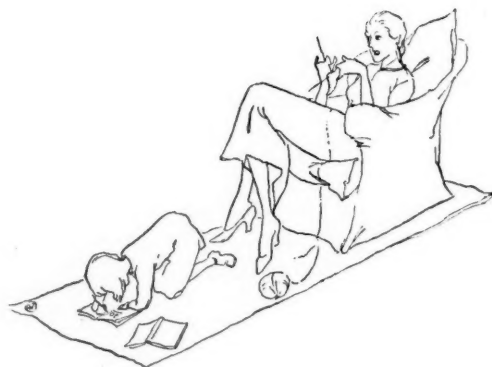
as the maid who came after you has now left due to everything coming to pieces in her hands Madam. Okay Lucy said. Also Mrs. P. said, I wondered if William could buttle for me to impress Herbert who apparently moves in circles while I only run round in them. Hed love to Lucy said. You wait I said. No Lucy said, you wait and I cook, oh revoor Madam.

I had words with Lucy until a fellow called from five doors away and said would I mind talking a little louder as he always liked to hear both sides of a discussion, so I said Lucy I am now closing down but if youre a thought reader now is your chance to peruse a banned volume.

Anyway on the Thursday I went there and Mrs. P. gave me gladrags to don while Lucy cheffed. At seven this fellow came and said good evening, what a smell of moth balls. Hang your things up I said, youre just in time to join me in a beer. Who the suchansuch are you? he said. The old family retainer I said, haughty. Indeed? he said, Im King Charles the First and Second so what? Then Mrs. P. swep in in one of those modern fast hussy dresses and said aha at last you have flown into my lonely little nest. Well I said, no doubt you two want to be alone so I will now push off, kindly shout if you require me Madam as you never can tell.

When I went in and said its ready Madam Mrs. P. was playing merry hell on the piano and singing something about lovebirds singing trala laha which of course is a lie George. May I take your arm Cecily? he said. Certainly she said, all coy, if I may come with it. Well after the meal this fellow kept saying that will do my man that will do until finally I said I know when Im not wanted and went. I told Lucy and she said dont you dare miss a word of it, what are your ears for? Eavesdropping is hardly comeel fo I said. If they say anything you shouldnt hear Lucy said, you neednt listen.

Then the phone rang and I said me here and a voice said The Duke of Surbiton here. I rushed in and said ooh Madam, theres a Duke on the phone. When she went this fellow said my word, a Duke hay? is Mrs. P. much sought after? Perpetually I said, and I dont just mean by creditors, she is a snip to the right customer and withdrew. In the hall Mrs. P. said it was only the local hostelry ringing re orders, but I thought if that impresses him, here goes, so I went in



"I LOVE ARITHMETIC."

"BUT MISS GULL SAYS IN YOUR REPORT YOU DON'T."

"OH, SHE'S THINKIN' OF THE ANSWERS. I HATE THEM!"



"GOOD-BYE—AND THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME."

and said pardon the intrusion and cigarette Madam but I thought you would like to know as how the Prime Minister has not phoned this evening, as yet. Thank you she said winking, and if His Excellency calls tell him I'm engaged, or practically.

Cecily this fellow said, your social trimmings impress me, was the late Posset a somebody? Posset she said, wore himself out pushing shares all over America in partnership with a fellow called Slippery Sam, they did so well the government there said Sam had pushed so hard he must rest for a year but Posset was not invited though they tried hard to find his address. However she said, he waited for Sam to finish his holiday and said Samuel my conscience has awakened, so they went to Niagara and Posset threw all the shares over the falls in a suitcase, returned to England and married me, hay ho I was but twenty seven then. And now? this fellow said. Thirty nine in June she said, but of course George she didn't say of what year. Still this fellow said, you allure me, can you guess what I have in mind? I sincerely hope so she said, as I'm saying yes.

Then the wedding is arranged he said, I'll buy you a ring with more sparkle than a syphon of soda if you give me power to sign on your account as of course I insist on relieving you of the onerous task of bothering your pretty head re finances. Herbert she said, this is heaven or a very good tracing.

I just popped in and said hearty congrats you two and then hastened to Lucy and told her what had befallen. You needn't of boosted her she said, Herbert would of wed her anyway. Kindly unfold I said. Well she said, just before I left Mrs. Posset's this Herbert called and asked for Mr. P., he said for twenty years he had been combing the world to find him. It seems she said, that this Herbert is Sam's brother and when Mr. Posset threw all the shares over Niagara in a suitcase he quite forgot to take the suitcase out of Sam's hand so he was unable to give Sam his share of the profits and this Herbert was very upset as being Sam's next of kin he is morally entitled to collect fifty percent of the £.s.d. Well Sir I said, Mr. Posset is now the late, so your only chance is to lead Mrs. P. to the nuptials, it's a terrible price to pay but. I'll do it he said, I am determined to get my due if it kills me. Knowing Mrs. P. as I do Lucy said, I would say it probably will and if it doesn't he will soon be wishing it would.

Well George honesty is the best policy I say, but sometimes these days I wonder just who to pay the premium to. I hope you are well and am

Your affect. friend

WILLIAM TWISS.

P.S.—Never marry a girl who believes in a place for everything and everything in its place because you can take it from me George that everything includes husbands.

At the Play

"QUIET WEDDING" (WYNDHAM'S)

In the last few weeks before any public wedding the protagonists, if they have not been hustled, measured and bullied into an early grave, must seriously ask themselves whether it is indeed a religious ceremony (much more, a sacrament) for which they are preparing or an outing for the dressmaking and catering trades which will give their friends a nice slice of Drury Lane pageantry for nothing and their relations an excuse for a mild and socially unexceptionable drunk.

Out of this fantastic confusion of issues, so rooted in the female mind and so incapable of explanation, Miss ESTHER MCCrackEN has made a light comedy which should keep the town laughing through the next crisis and even through the crisis after that. It seems good to me for a number of reasons. Very well put together in terms of the theatre, it has a natural humour and a wit which cuts without being forced; it is more satisfactory than the frothy comedies we have been having lately because there is a substantial quantity of lead in its keel, and its characters are not ashamed to discuss a point of interest when one crops up; and so well has Miss MCCrackEN observed the absurdities of the English domestic scene and of the Englishman's unconscious reaction to his traditional conviction that ritual is foreign to his simple nature that with all its necessary exaggerations the play is a social document which may make mothers think again. I assume that fathers have already done so. And lest these virtues should not be enough, the play has been cunningly sprinkled with those gilt-edged household lines to do with shortage of cauliflowers, ricketiness of the spare bed and the dyspeptic behaviour of the boiler, which always draw the heartiest laughter extractable from either Mayfair or Ponders End.

The bride is *Janet Royd* (Miss ELIZABETH ALLAN) and her solid conventional family live in the country, in exactly what style it is difficult to tell; judging from the price they pay for champagne they might be rich, while judging from the service they put up with they might be about to file their petition. *Arthur Royd* (Mr. GEORGE THORPE), the father, is a steady kindly

man of business, and *Mildred* (Miss MARJORIE FIELDING), the mother, is a human Buff Orpington, scratching frantically at the surface of everything and making small impression. There



TAKING AN INTEREST IN HIS WORK
Denys Royd. Mr. CLIVE MORTON
Flower Lisle. Miss ANNE FIRTH

are also brothers and aunts, bearing ingeniously on the main situation. The groom, *Dallas Chaytor* (Mr.



GETTING AWAY FROM IT ALL
Dallas Chaytor. Mr. FRANK LAWTON
Janet Royd. Miss ELIZABETH ALLAN

FRANK LAWTON) is a charming and considerate young man with whom *Janet* is very much in love, as he is with her; but in spite of this the wedding preliminaries have reduced her to a state of nerves in which she begins to wonder. Strange women with measuring-tapes in their hands and a terrible gloating in their eyes have been mauling her now for weeks; idiotic letters fraught with every kind of offensive suggestion have been pouring in upon her in a flood; enough glass-bowls and clocks and cocktail-shakers have already arrived to stock an hotel; and suddenly she finds she can only see *Dallas* as a distant little object separated from her by miles of shiny fabrics and tittering strangers.

Their relationship is in such a mess on the night before the wedding that *Dallas*, with no malice aforethought, persuades her to steal out and drive with him to their new flat, so that they can talk things over quietly. After they have agreed that they are as much in love as ever, *Janet* insists that they stay the night. In the morning their car breaks down and they only get back an hour before the wedding. Of this excellent last scene I will say no more than that it treats us to the delightful irony of *Mrs. Royd*, who has been successfully primed with a story of an early walk, beside herself with indignation that any daughter of hers should have met her groom on the morning of their wedding.

On so neat a piece of social controversy there are many comments one could make. *Janet* is too level-headed a girl to behave quite as she did, and she and *Dallas* are obviously people who would long before have discussed together every aspect of marriage; but these points are not great concessions to make to a dramatist with Miss MCCrackEN's lightness of touch and sharp sense of human foible. I should like to praise so good a cast individually, but they must go together into a bracket marked "Highly satisfactory," which must certainly include the name of Mr. MAURICE BROWNE for a production particularly adroit. ERIC.

"The Secretary said riflemen were a great asset to the country, and they learned to shoot out of their own pocket, yet practically in no way were they helped by the Government."

Report in "The West Briton."

Which won't even pay for mending the holes.



"... AND THEY LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER, DADDY, AND THEN WE ALL STOOD UP AND SANG 'GOOD GRACIOUS ME.'"

History

THE following quotations from *Every Child's Book of the Past*, published in 2039, may help us to see the year that is just closing in a right perspective.

1938 will always be remembered for the violent demand of the railway companies for a square deal. For years they had been getting restive, and things were suddenly brought to a head by the Premier's abandonment of the train in favour of the aeroplane when visiting friends in a hurry. Tension increased as the year wore on, but all was settled happily at Munich owing to the good offices of Messrs. Hitler and Mussolini. It was agreed that the railways were to be allowed to quote without restriction for the transport of farmers coming to London to protest against the Milk Bill, and the railway companies agreed to replace old buffers if the Premier would do the same.

The invention by Stalin of a silent road-drill was regarded by the German Government as a direct insult, and all German exhibitors at the show of budgerigars at Wimbledon withdrew as a protest. The invention was useful, however, to dig trenches in Hyde Park without disturbing the flowers.

Sir John Anderson took charge of A.R.P., and his first move was to get Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge back on the stage together.

Industry revived to some extent towards the close of the year, particularly the paper industry, large quantities of paper being used to make Trade Agreements with practically everybody, including such unlikely people as the United States and Ireland.

After Hutton had made a world record score of 354 in the Test Match at the Oval it was decided to introduce a Penal Reform Bill which looked like making things so pleasant for the criminal population that a League of Honest Citizens appealed to Herr

Hitler to use his influence with the British Government to obtain for them Equality of Status.

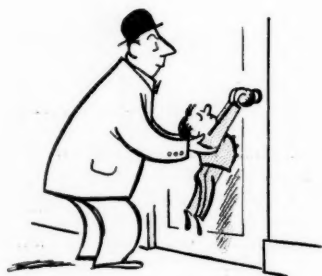
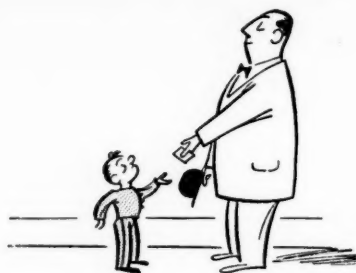
Lord Nuffield was estimated by the end of the year to have given away a total so far of £13,000,000, but nobody really believed that there was all that money about.

In Home politics 1938 will be remembered as the year when men strove as never before for National Unity. As a first step to this each party began to split up into units.

The centenary of the birth of Henry Irving was celebrated. Few modern stars of the entertainment world, however, added much to their reputation, with the possible exception of Donald Duck. The centenary of John Morley was also celebrated.

The weather was much as usual, unseasonable in every season. Income-tax went up and beer went down, though not in price. Altogether 1938 was a year whose end everybody was glad to celebrate.

Albert or The Extraordinary Pig



THE queerest animal I ever had here on my farm (said Mr. Harrison) was Albert. He was the queerest by a long way, was Albert, and, mind you, I've had a mort of queer animals down here.

Albert was a pig, but he warn't no porker. No, Sir, Albert was an educated pig from a circus. I seen him perform once a couple of years before I come to own him, and his talent was astonishing. He could play cards like there was his own money on the game, and he could sing, too, well enough for the choir. But it was arithmetic that was Albert's masterpiece. He'd got a grasp on figures that was just beautiful. They'd set him a sum and he'd be rapping out the answer with his little pink trotter long before I'd got there myself. Addition, subtraction, multiplication—it all come alike to Albert. He'd have made a book-keeper in a thousand and if only so be he'd been born to another sphere of life.

Well, when the circus come round again after a couple of years, I went along to have another look at Albert and see how his education was getting on. But he warn't showing. I stopped behind afterwards to ask where he was, and a fellow told me. He says, "I'm afraid Albert's getting past it. He ain't so young as he was, and he's taken to temperament."

"Taken to temperament?" I says. "Worse 'n if he was on the films," says the feller. "You can't rely on him no more. He can count so well now that he counts up how much money there is in the house the moment he comes in, and if he don't think there's enough, he quits. He's got high an' mighty too—reckons he knows better 'n arithmetic books that was printed before he was born. He's that cussed that when he gives the wrong answer he won't allow maybe he's in the wrong. Oh no, he's right and everybody else is

wrong. So we've had to cut him out of the show."

"What are you going to do with him?" I asks.

"Don't know," said the fellow. "He's past the bacon stage."

Well, the long and the short of it was I offered to give Albert a comfortable home to end his days. One pig more or less warn't going to make much difference to my feed-bill, and I hoped perhaps he'd give us a bit of amusement when he felt affable enough to show off his knowledge. And the feller agrees, and I drives Albert home.

I shut him up for the night by himself, and in the morning I turned him out with a lot of young porkers I thought 'ud be company for him.

Well, Sir, I was wrong. Albert took one look at 'em and sat down and sulked. You could see he was just disgusted to find himself mixing with a lot of country bumpkins that didn't know how many beans made five. He never did come to get along well with the other pigs. By-and-by he got to tolerate 'em, but he was never on what you might call sociable terms with 'em. You see, Albert was a pig that liked a bit of intellectual company. He'd been brought up on it, and he appreciated it. And all the intellect in my farmyard you could have stuffed into an ear of wheat, and without troubling to take out the grain, neither. There wasn't a pig on the farm he could get anything from, and he scorned the whole boiling of 'em.

Well, Sir, Albert was a plumb miserable pig, and he got dolefuller and dolefuller. I reckon he was missing his game of cards as well. I tried to get him to sit in on a hand of poker one afternoon, but I seemed to play a different game from him, and the thing was a failure. He wouldn't show off his accomplishments neither. He just



wandered around with a patient, martyred, how-long sort of look on his face that made a body yearn to chuck a bucket at him. He was just sinful with pride over his brains, and he looked like he could have wept at the way they was going to waste among ignorant folk like us.

He was interfering too. There was a couple of setting hens that only hatched out seven chicks apiece, so naturally I put all the chicks under one hen and sent the other back to the run. I seen him with my own eyes wasting a whole morning trying to convince the hen with the chicks that you couldn't get fourteen chicks out of thirteen eggs, and somebody was trying to put something over on her. He gave it up as a bad job in the end, though, and I warn't surprised. You couldn't get an idea into a hen's head with a coal-hammer.

Funny enough, though, we found ourselves getting fond of the old boy. Don't know what it was about him, 'less it was his independence, but we kind of liked having him around, and it went to our hearts to see him in such poor spirits.

He got so low in the end we was prepared for the worst. He spent all his time brooding over the past. He couldn't sleep a wink at night for thinking of it, and in the morning he'd be tired out with wakefulness. I called in the vet and he said it was a clear case of insomnia, and he said too it was the first time he'd ever struck a pig with *that* complaint.

"It's the first time you ever struck a pig like Albert," I tells him.

"Well," says the vet, "if you can't get him to take his rest at nights like an ordinary pig I warn you he won't be long for this world. I'll mix him up a sleeping-draught, and that's the best I can do."

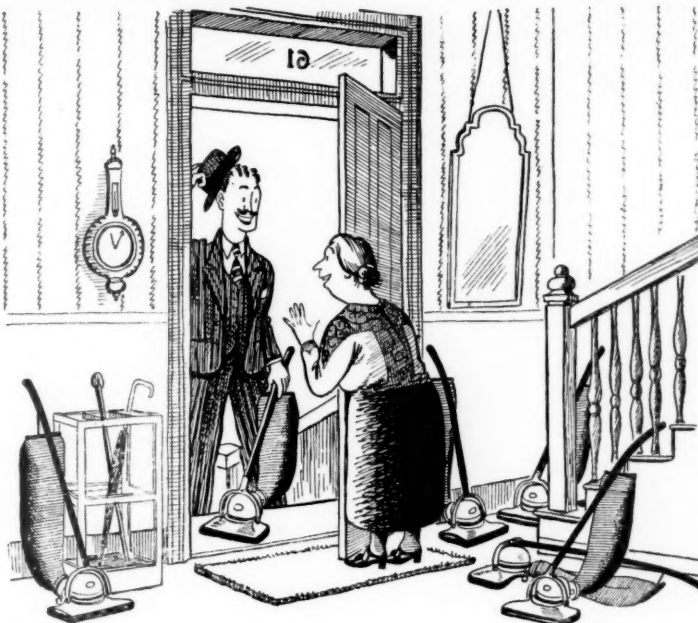
But Albert warn't taking no sleeping-draught. He got just about crazy for lack o' sleep and we judged the end warn't far off.

And then, darn me if he didn't perk up all on his own! I found him one morning quite spry and ready for his breakfast for once. He looked rested, and a body could see he'd had a tolerable night's rest. Me and the missus was so pleased we ate a breakfast pretty near as big as his.

He went on getting better, and after about five days he was another pig. I don't mean he was any more sociable or less stuck-up over his cleverness, but we was so glad to see him all right again we didn't worry about that.

"Wonder what's made him start sleeping again?" says the missus.

"Don't know," I says. And I didn't either until the next night.



"GOOD AFTERNOON, MRS. BENNINGTON. HERE I AM AGAIN."

"What's all that running about in the orchard?" says the missus just as we was off to bed. "Something got loose?"

"I'll go and see," I says, and I takes my stick and creeps out.

Well, Sir, what I see I see with my own eyes, and I'm telling you no lie. Albert had barged a hole in the hedge and he was driving all my sheep—the whole flock of 'em—through that hole, one by one. And as every sheep went through he gave the ground a rap with his trotter, counting it. Yes, Sir, I stood there and watched Albert count off thirty-seven of 'em before he give in and just rolled over where he stood and dropped off to sleep like a new-born babe.

That just shows you what education does to an animal, don't it? I tell you, I never had another pig on my farm the like of Albert.

Nightfall

I SWEAR to thee, O God of Locomotion,
Here on my reverently bended knees,
A life of supernatural devotion

If, just for once, our motor may not freeze!

Grant me this night that I may dip my candle,

So confident in your omnipotence,
That when I turn to-morrow's steely handle

A feline purr shall be my recompense.

Surely it hurts your fond parental ears

To hear your offspring's loud diurnal gasps,
Her choking cough, her screaming tortured gears,
And intermittent respiratory rasps.

Each morning George and I, with "she" beside us,

Pray, as we tug and pull and swear and strain,
That thou, Celestial Sparking Plug, may guide us
To catch for once the early London train.

O thou to whom all little engines turn,

Do, I beseech thee, also deign to turn 'em,
Lest it become my everyday concern

To push my husband all the way to Burnham. V. G.



"HOW UNCANNY! I COULD HAVE SWORN THAT THERE WAS A WOMAN SINGING SOMEWHERE QUITE NEAR US."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks.)

Collectors' Catalogue

THE golden period of the Romantic Ballet of the nineteenth century—the 'thirties and 'forties, dominated by the supreme three, MARIE TAGLIONI, CARLOTTA GRISI and FANNY ELSSLER—produced in England an enthusiastic cult and, ancillary to it, a considerable number of contemporary lithographs of stars in action for the solace of their admirers. *The Romantic Ballet* (FABER AND FABER, 50/-), by CYRIL W. BEAUMONT and SACHEVERELL SITWELL, is in effect a warm invitation to become a collector of these prints with a beautifully illustrated catalogue of the available material to point the invitation. Mr. BEAUMONT annotates the catalogue out of the abundance of his specialised knowledge and adds some notes on the movement and its dancers. Mr. SITWELL offers desultory—which is not to say uninteresting—comment on the illustrators, dancers and choreographers and their work. But the catalogue's the thing. The collotype reproductions are admirable in their fidelity to the characteristic texture of the lithographic originals; nor is the scale too small for plausibility, while the nine prints coloured by the stencil process are technically superb. Of the one hundred-and-twenty known ballet pictures and ballet-music title-pages eighty-one are here reproduced, of which some fifty are the work of A. E. CHALON, J. BOUVIER and J. BRANDARD. A book emphatically to keep the balletomanes quiet for many a day.

"This New Charlemagne"

France's unrivalled powers of pulling herself together after a period of dismemberment are the timely theme of a fine historical study by Sir CHARLES PETRIE, Bart. *Louis XIV.* (BUTTERWORTH, 15/-) is a convincing portrait into the bargain—it is not the customary view of the ROI SOLEIL, all *gules* and *or*, supported by Mars and Venus. It starts by portraying a small boy who inherited a land torn by religious and civil factions, a puppet monarch of so little account that the Paris mob was more than once admitted—because it could not be kept out—to his very bedchamber. This state of things had obviously got to end. The Frondeurs had got to know their place. France had to be restored in the monarchy and the monarchy in France. And it is this restoration of centralised authority—coupled with the fatal error of its exaggeration—which this fascinating volume so skillfully presents. There are new letters of LOUIS's; there are admirable portraits of such great coadjutors as COLBERT and VAUBAN; the mistresses and Court ecclesiastics (orthodox and unorthodox alike) take suitable back-seats. It is probably the best English biography that a French king has ever received.

Barrieana

Mr. W. A. DARLINGTON, looking for an angle from which to write *J. M. Barrie* (BLACKIE, 5/-) in the pleasant little "O.M." series, has seen his subject as a man of the theatre. The result is a book, interesting and well-written, which will remind his readers of many a great first-night or memorable run, and incidentally of phrases such as "the little Mary" with which BARRIE enriched our everyday speech. The good dramatist does not pull off a slick trick with technique and *clichés*, but puts as much of himself into his work as does the good novelist. Mr. DARLINGTON knows this, for he recognises the effect of the failure of his marriage on BARRIE's work and—it is inescapable—that of his love for his mother, and of that friendship with five little boys from which came *Peter Pan*. We should like him to have told us much more, for instance, of BARRIE's views on religion, perhaps the most important factor in the work of any author. He might too have made more of the tragedy of the playwright's old



"IF IT'S DATED 1927 IT CAN'T BE SPURIOUS—IT WOULD HAVE BEEN NOTICED BEFORE THIS."

age, the failure of *The Boy David*; but the reticence and good taste of his book are too refreshing in these blatant days for any omission which springs from them to be a matter of serious complaint.

Hunter's Pie

Horses, Hounds and Country is

A picture-book with prose to spare;
Each part is MICHAEL LYNE's and his
Palette and pen seem just the pair
For this, a work of Nimrod knowledge,
Where the red fox runs and the wild
red stag,
Where we meet the beagles of Eton
College
Or cheer a hound on an otter's drag.

Here is province, here is shire,
Here's the Beaufort blue-and-buff
And the Berkeley yellow; and you'll
admire
How Irish hounds give a horse his
'nuff;
And here Dan Russell must pay for
robbery
On the rolling pastures of famous
Quorn;
And here's a rascal pack of bobbery
That flies to a touch of our artist's
horn.

Mr. LYNE in black-and-white

Is individual as a rule;
In colour I think that he finds delight
In skies and scapes of the EDWARDS
school—
Cloud and a far green vale extended.
He writes with a youthful hardihood;
His book is one to be recommended
And bought from EYRE AND SPOT-
TISWOODE.

Regency Romance

Mr. HUGH EDWARDS has written *Macaroni* (GEOFFREY BLES, 7/6), a picaresque romance. His hero is one *William de Loret*, an Irishman of good French blood who is also a merchant in Surinam. We meet him first, a returned wanderer, young and rich, in the crowded streets of Cork, attracted as ever by the side-long glance of a pretty girl. For the gallant lad has adventures with the ladies wherever he goes, and he goes to many places. Back to the West Indies under escort, for we are at war with the First Consul—and indeed *William's* father still languishes in a French prison. Then an expedition up-river to see one *Sully Lopez*, a vulgar, crafty, arrogant rogue who is trying to wriggle out of a contract. He too has a charming daughter. *William* takes occasion to kill the fellow, casually as it were, and so off to Port of Spain, Trinidad, where his brother *John* keeps a store. There he comes across *Isabel Chacon*, a lovely, discontented, graceful and naughty wench, disturbing, petulant, seductive (Mr. EDWARDS is great on adjectives), whom he must possess. He possesses her and sets off to visit his uncle *John*

in Portsmouth, Va., a journey with more adventures. Thence to Philadelphia, where he finds *Amanda Stebleton*, ravishing and young. We conclude with a voyage in a vessel smitten with *Yellow Jack*; a duel in which *William* kills his antagonist; flight, a last adventure in Portugal, with a slight knife-wound in the hip as a memento, and *The End*. We have read few books fuller of adventure or studded with finer pearls of speech. A *Macaroni* of a book!

Anglo-Saxon Attitudes

It is true that many of them are Celtic and one or two Norman, but the more numerous examples of Mr. F. J. DRAKE-CARNELL's assemblage of *Old English Customs and Ceremonies* (BATSFORD, 7/6) live up to the protestation of



WHAT OUR ARTIST HAS TO PUT UP WITH

Friendly Critic. "HUMPH! A LITTLE WOOLLY IN TEXTURE. ISN'T IT? OF COURSE I DON'T MEAN THE SHEEP!"

George Du Maurier, December 31st, 1887.

the title-page. The author, a lecturer on old towns and buildings, salvaged this treasure of (mainly living) tradition in the course of other research; and the fact that its hundred-odd excellent photographs range it in a well-known series does not relegate his text to a subordinate place. Here then you have the ceremonies of a parliament as old as the Isle of Man "Thing," and ritual as novel as the lamps of Toc H. Such customs are a large part of our island tenacity. Doles, whether of bread only or the livelier ones that include beer, are responsible for much admirable matter, and old photographs are admitted when, like that of the Hiring Fair at Burford, they commemorate a good thing recently vanished. Public Schools, the Army, the Navy, pompous City Companies, wrinkled recipients of Maundy Money—it is a highly miscellaneous and representative England that furnishes so amply and creditably these picturesque and entertaining pages.

And Mr. Pots the Painter

The *Daily Mail* was wise in making *Miss Bun the Baker's Daughter* (COLLINS, 7/6) its Christmas Book Choice. The author, Miss D. E. STEVENSON, must have solved the present-problem of those who wished to buy a book for Aunt So-and-So, who disapproves of most modern novels but likes a good story about really nice people. For *Miss Bun* is good and nice (almost as nice as her grandparents), full of commonsense, and with just enough nonsense about her to make her attractive. The story of her taking an emergency job in an artist's household and remaining as housekeeper and amateur art critic, after his wife left him, is well told. If you doubt whether a girl brought up in a small Scottish town could be quite so clever in her dealings with London art-dealers, then *Miss Bun* will remind you that REMBRANDT's mother was a baker's daughter. Some may complain that while writing this pleasant story the author must have dipped her pen in milk-and-water, but that is a better choice than vinegar-and-It. Many will be grateful for *Miss Bun* and her friend the painter.

Solitude

Readers of *Antarctic Discovery* will remember that in Rear-Admiral BYRD's account of his second Antarctic expedition only scant reference is made to the Admiral's five months of absolute isolation at a spot far south of the expedition's headquarters. Now after some four years he has broken his silence, and in *Alone* (PUTNAM, 7/6) we can find a story all the more moving because it is so modestly told. The original idea had been that three observers should occupy this outpost, but that scheme became impracticable, and since only one man could be posted, BYRD determined that he, if anybody, must be that man. People who depend almost solely upon others to provide them with amusement and interest will be utterly unable to sympathise with some of the Admiral's reasons for

isolating himself, but no one will fail to appreciate his bravery in refusing to allow his comrades to risk their lives in a premature effort to rescue him, however urgent it really was that help should be forthcoming. This remarkable record deserves unstintingly the warmest of welcomes.

Poirot Keeps It Up

The charm of an AGATHA CHRISTIE book is always difficult to analyse. She drives her suspects into a pen, attaching their "motive" labels as they go by, slaughters her appointed victim, and then sends in the old dog *Poirot*, who invariably ends his mysterious gyrations by huddling the poor creatures into a corner and yapping at each in turn, "It's you! It's you! It's you! It's you! It's you! It's you!" None of them ever seems to resent this treatment. They take their several

accusations of murder with a silent stoicism which does them credit; even the actual criminal generally refrains from interrupting by word or gesture the final masterly exposition of his guilt; nor do any of the others cry out or point the finger of loathing at the man of blood. Possibly they all think that even now *Hercule* may be foxing them with a tenth false accusation—one is too ready to forget that the characters in a story lack the reader's vital knowledge that the next two pages are the last. Every writer of crime fiction uses conventions in some degree, but few or none dare use them so blatantly as AGATHA CHRISTIE. The extraordinary thing is that she "gets away with it." The ingenuity of her murders, her fairness in the matter of clues, her admirable *M. Poirot* combine to make the reader forget the arti-

ficialities and remember only the entertainment of the story. *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* (CRIME CLUB, 7/6) which assembles as likely a lot of suspects and contrives as simply elaborate a murder as the most exacting reader could require, is the latest addition to her long list—not one of the very best, but good enough.

A Widow's Mites

Miss ETHEL LINA WHITE has already won fame in the field of thrilling fiction, and as far as her reputation is concerned *Step in the Dark* (COLLINS, 7/6) is also a step in the right direction. A widow, with two small girls, who was a best-selling novelist, became infatuated with a Swedish count and by her conduct went some way towards inviting a part of the trouble that came her way. Dangers, in fact, both to herself and her children, soon arrived in ample measure, for they were kidnapped and interned on an island belonging to the count, where, to put it mildly, the widow was scurvily treated. Miss WHITE surrounds her story with an atmosphere of suspense and doom, and although the end of it may be a little crude, it will doubtless be popular with those who have managed to retain their sympathy for the kidnapped lady.





ANNUS FORMIDABILIS

THIS was the year that made us tireless
 Of listening-in to the evening wireless,
 This was the year when dull December
 Bade us crouch by the falling ember
 And write to our Parliamentary Member,
 This was the year when once again
 "Non-Intervention" bloomed in Spain,
 This was the year in which Japan
 Continued to "help" the Chinaman,
 This was the year when the butterless Huns
 Proved themselves to be sons of guns,
 Tortured and robbed to make more clear
 That the world should love them. This was the year.

This was the year of the great "Perhaps,"
 This was the year when countless chaps
 Stood in the street and scanned the maps,
 Trying to pierce with eyes like falcons
 What was happening behind the Balkans,
 This was the year when Appeasement grew,
 This was the year when the Premier flew
 Over the sea on his sporting flight
 To the Berchtesgaden eremite.
 This was the year when his favourite brotly,
 Wreathed with mistletoe, crowned with holly,
 Stood in the hall with a card on top
 Bearing the name Von Ribbentrop,
 This was the year when the famous axis
 Probably means a rise in taxes,
 This was the year when every nation
 Armed itself for pacification.

This was the year when A.R.P.
Was the only topic discussed at tea,
This was a year when the sea-kings' race
Grew gas-mask-conscious about the face
And certain symptoms of no, not fear,
But apprehension, were noted here
In Nelson's island. This was the year.

This was the year when the two Dictators—
Oh, if they both were hibernators,
Curled in bed like a couple of dormice
Now when the Rhine and the Danube form ice,
Held in bounds by the winter's trammels,
Resting a while!—but these two mammals,
Day after day, whatever the weather,
Still continue to shriek and blether.
And "What in the world will he say to-morrow?"
Tapping their heads, the statesmen sorrow.
"Heaven alone can tell, my brother!"
One ambassador sighs to another;
But still they cry for the stars, the moon,
Nobody knows what they'll shout for soon.
"But it makes it dreadfully hard, my dear,
For Chamberlain's policy." This was the year.

This is the year when Mr. Punch
Still continues to have a hunch
That most of his words about the two
Totalitarian Powers were true.
And, thinking this, he would much prefer
A Compulsory National Register
And that very soon,

If it please you, Sir.

And this is his

One Hundred and Ninety-Fifth Volume



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